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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this publication is to help schools develop middle-level programs that reflect the Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades. The document contains names and addresses of schools and individuals who are willing to help other schools implement the recommendations of the policy statement. The document also describes programs and practices that demonstrate how schools with middle-level grades have translated the policy statement from theory into practice. The programs and practices described have been successful in local schools. The descriptions are drawn from the responses of more than 100 schools to a request for information concerning promising programs and practices in the middle grades. Persons interested in a particular program or practice are urged to contact the school, speak with the contact people, gather additional information, and finally, make an informed decision as to whether the program or practice is appropriate and beneficial. Promising programs and practices are grouped under the general headings of: (1) school structure and organization; and (2) classroom instruction. Each group is divided into seven areas, e.g., creating teacher teams with common planning time; developing advisor-advisee, home-based guidance, or student mentor programs; involving students in their own learning; and developing interdisciplinary programs. The Regents Policy Statement is included. (RH)

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Promising Programs Practices

IN MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION

A Reference and Resource for Practitioners Interested in Implementing the Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools With Middle-Level Grades

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NEW YORK
THE STATE OF LEARNING

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Office of General and Occupational Education
Middle-Level Education Program
1990

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people contributed to the preparation of this document. The State Education Department wishes to thank the middle-level educators who took the time to document their promising programs and practices and submit them for inclusion in *Promising Programs and Practices in Middle-Level Education*. Thanks also are given to Edith Leet who carefully edited the material to ensure uniformity and consistency among the descriptions of the various programs and practices. Finally, special thanks go to Cheryl Mitchell who prepared the initial draft of the publication and made all the final changes; without her efforts *Promising Programs and Practices in Middle-Level Education* would not exist.

FOREWORD

At its March 1989 meeting, the Board of Regents approved the *Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades*. As result of this action, many schools with middle-level grades have expressed a desire to develop and implement educational programs and practices that reflect the Regents Policy Statement. The New York State Education Department encourages and supports such efforts.

To aid schools in developing middle-level programs that reflect the Regents Policy Statement, the State Education Department has prepared *Promising Programs and Practices in Middle-Level Education*. This publication is intended to be a resource and a reference for schools. It contains names and addresses of schools and people willing to assist other schools implement the recommendations of the Regents Policy Statement. It also provides valuable information, in the form of specific programs and practices, on how schools with middle-level grades have translated the Regents Policy Statement from theory to practice.

The programs and practices described in this publication are self-nominated and self-reported. In a general mailing, the State Education Department requested schools with middle-level grades, if they had what they believed to be promising programs and practices, to submit descriptions of them for inclusion in a Department publication. More than 100 schools responded to the general request and provided descriptions of what they believed to be promising programs and practices in the middle grades.

The programs and practices contained in this publication are examples of successful programs in local schools. Persons interested in a particular program or practice described in this publication are urged to contact the school, speak with the contact people, gather additional information, and, finally, make an informed decision as to whether or not the program or practice is appropriate for their situation and would enhance the education of their middle-level students.

The promising programs and practices described in this publication are grouped under two general headings, each of which is further divided into seven areas.

I. **School Structure and Organization**

Area a: Transforming a traditional junior high school into a middle-level school

Area b: Establishing "houses" or schools-within-schools in buildings where the total student population is large

Area c: Developing advisor-advisee, home-based guidance, or student mentor programs

Area d: Creating teacher teams with common planning time

Area e: Implementing student grouping strategies that maintain heterogeneous classes, grouping only for specific purposes and for brief periods

Area f: Scheduling flexible time assignments within blocks of time to encourage interdisciplinary programs and creative time use

Area g: Involving parents and community in the education of middle-level students

II. **Classroom Instruction**

Area h: Involving students in their own learning

Area i: Using a variety of teaching strategies to match instruction to the varied learning styles of students

Area j: Developing interdisciplinary programs

Area k: Instituting cooperative learning and/or peer tutoring opportunities for students

Area l: Planning and implementing exploratory experiences for middle-level students

Area m: Developing in students a feeling of personal efficacy and a sense of responsibility for themselves and others

Area n: Identifying desired student outcomes for the middle-level grades and appropriate assessment techniques

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PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

School Organization and Structure

Area a: Transforming a traditional junior high school into a middle-level school
Area b: Establishing "houses" or schools-within-schools in buildings where the total student population is large
Area c: Developing advisor-advisee, home-based guidance, or student mentor programs
Area d: Creating teacher teams with common planning time
Area e: Implementing student grouping strategies that maintain heterogeneous classes, grouping only for specific purposes and for brief periods
Area f: Scheduling flexible time assignments within blocks of time to encourage interdisciplinary programs and creative time use
Area g: Involving parents and community in the education of middle-level students

Area a

Transforming a Traditional Junior High School into a Middle-Level School

Many schools with middle-level grades are considering a change in their educational orientation from that of a traditional junior high school to that of a middle-level school reflecting the Regents Policy Statement. Information from schools that have made such a transformation is presented in this section — the major reason(s) for initiating the change, the planning process used (who was involved, what steps were taken, what time line was followed), the resources needed, the community and staff orientation/training required, the major problems encountered and their resolution, any caveats or advice.

Area a: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Amherst Central School District
  Amherst Middle School
- Churchville-Chili Central School District
  Churchville-Chili Middle School
- East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District
  Kinne Street Elementary School
- Hamburg Central School District
  Hamburg Junior High School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Islip Middle Union Free School District
  Islip Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston Porter Middle School
- New York State School Boards Association
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Rensselaer City School District
  Rensselaer Middle School
- Scarsdale Union Free School District
  Scarsdale Junior High School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- Syosset Central School District
  H. B. Thompson Middle School
- Troy City School District
  W. K. Doyle Middle School
- Wappingers Central School District
  Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
- Wayland Central School District
  Wayland Central School

DISTRICT: Amherst Central School District
SCHOOL: Amherst Middle School
ADDRESS: 55 Kings Highway
Amherst, NY 14226
TELEPHONE: (716) 836-3000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Anton C. Schwarzmueller, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

As soon as the decision was made to bring sixth-graders into the Junior High School building in the Amherst Central School District, a committee consisting of the 6th grade teachers to be assigned to the Junior High building and Junior High teachers and counselors was established by the principal of the Junior High.

The committee's task was to deal with all matters related to the new grade configuration. This included orientation activities designed to ease the transition of sixth-graders to the junior high building. Some of these activities had been used in previous years to help the transition of elementary school sixth-graders to the junior high building. However, the emphasis would now be placed upon the goals of allaying the anxiety of students and parents and helping the new sixth-graders to become a unified part of a new school.

- Parent meetings were held early in the spring preceding the school year in which the sixth-graders were scheduled to be housed in the junior high school. These meetings were chaired by the principal and assisted by the assistant principal, 6th grade teachers, junior high school teachers, and counselors. The school program planned for the sixth-graders was presented, and school procedures, rules, and regulations were discussed. Questions and suggestions were solicited from the parent audience. All questions were answered in the meeting or in writing following the meeting. Parents were then given a tour of the building. They were shown the classrooms that would be occupied by their children in the elementary school building, e.g., a swimming pool, home economics rooms, technology rooms, etc.

- Shortly following the parent meetings, the principal and assistant principal visited each of the four elementary schools to talk with the fifth-graders (the class to enter as sixth-graders in the fall). The school program was explained to the fifth-graders as well as some of the school's procedures and rules. Students were invited to ask questions, and they did so in great numbers. This enabled the school administrators to learn those matters that seemed to be of most concern to the students. These questions seemed to center around fear of getting lost in the building, "being picked on" by older students, being forced to accept drugs, etc.

- Later in the spring, the fifth-graders from each elementary school were brought to the junior high school to spend a day going to classes and participating in activities accompanied by 7th grade hosts.

- On the opening day of school in September, the seventh- to ninth-graders were brought to school for a morning session only. Then the new sixth-graders were brought in for the afternoon. They went to their assigned homerooms, met their teachers, filled in forms, and worked at learning how to open their lockers. One extra teacher from the 7-9 staff was assigned to assist each 6th grade homeroom teacher with these matters.

- Following the homeroom duties, the 6th grade students participated in field day activities conducted by teachers and parent volunteers. Half of the sixth-graders spent 45 minutes in indoor activities: swimming, volleyball, kickball, etc. At the same time, the remaining sixth-graders participated in outdoor activities: 3-legged races, relay races, tug-o-war, etc. Then the two groups switched for another 45 minutes of activities. Following this, students were treated to a picnic supper sponsored by the Student Council and the PTA.

Most middle schools have some kind of orientation program for incoming 6th or 5th grade students and their parents to provide important information about the school they are about to enter. The program described here is designed to do that, but more importantly, it is designed to deal with the natural anxiety of the students and parents as this new experience is about to begin.

In Amherst, the new experience began when the district decided to house all sixth-graders in the junior high school building. At the time the decision was made, there was not enough room in the high school building to accommodate the district's ninth-graders. Therefore, for two years, the junior high school operated as a 6-9 school. This arrangement heightened the importance of dealing with student and parent anxiety. The orientation program described did a great deal to help the new students start their school year as happy and confident individuals — part of a total class rather than frightened young people from four different school backgrounds.

Even though the junior high building has since become a 6-8 middle school, the program has continued in only slightly modified form.

The community now views this as a regular part of the middle school program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

❖ ❖ ❖

DISTRICT: Churchville-Chili Central School District
SCHOOL: Churchville-Chili Middle School
ADDRESS: 139 Fairbanks Road
Churchville, NY 14428
TELEPHONE: (716) 293-1800
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 800
CONTACT: Dr. Joseph W. Hoff, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

The story is told that during the Dark Ages, the repository of all knowledge was the monastery and that the answer to all questions could be found in the books of centuries past. Now it so happened that one day a visitor to the monastery thought, "I wonder...how many teeth are in a horse's mouth?" The keepers of all knowledge (the monks) responded in the time-tested manner to which they addressed all questions -they checked the books. *They checked the books of the East* that had been brought by Marco Polo. *They checked the books of the New World* (Africa). *They checked the books of Europe*. In no source was the number of teeth that were in a horse's mouth revealed. So they did what the prevailing logic of the time called for: they deduced *THERE ARE NO TEETH IN A HORSE'S MOUTH!*

The Churchville-Chili Central School District has enjoyed a long-standing reputation of implementing change and answering new questions in a proactive and a positive manner. One example was the planning model put into place during the 1985-86 school year. This process utilized 80 volunteer staff, parents, and administrators (via subcommittee structure) that had clearly identified timelines and specific questions that directed inquiry. Key questions were framed by a representative Steering Committee. This participatory process enabled us to create a school of which we all are justifiably proud. The Churchville-Chili Middle School, with over 800 pupils in its 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, is a well-defined tribute to what people can achieve when assumptions are analyzed with an eye to planned improvement. Our academic teaming, clearly defined reward systems, staff development program, shared decision making, and well-defined motivational techniques have helped extend our reputation as a model middle school. As our district continues its forward movement, so too does Churchville-Chili Middle School as we continue to press our limits for present and future success.

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DISTRICT: East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District
SCHOOL: Kinne St. Elementary School
ADDRESS: Kinne Street
East Syracuse, NY 13057
TELEPHONE: (315) 463-5285
GRADE SPAN: 4-6 ENROLLMENT:
CONTACT: Carolyn Pfeifer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: a

The sixth grade, which used to be a departmentalized program has been changed to a self-contained program with benefits beyond expectation. Students are calmer, better behaved, more able and ready to concentrate on academics. Achievement has improved.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

❖ ❖ ❖

DISTRICT: Hamburg Central School District
SCHOOL: Hamburg Junior High School
ADDRESS: 360 N. Division Street
Hamburg, NY 14075
TELEPHONE: (716) 649-6850
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 ENROLLMENT: 870
CONTACT: Arthur W. Robinson, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

Since 1987, Hamburg Junior High School has been engaging in steps to make the school more philosophically aligned as a school in the middle. That is, sequential steps have been taken to transform a very traditional secondary school structure into a more appropriate transitional experience for emerging adolescents. The school is organized by grades 7-9. It is not anticipated that the organizational structure will change within the near future. However, with emphasis on conditions involving primarily the 7th and 8th grades, changes have been made to give the internal school structure, the philosophy, and the educational experiences an appropriate school-in-the-middle emphasis.

Interdisciplinary teams have been established for all students in 7th and 8th grade. The 7th grade teams were implemented in September 1988. The 8th grade teams began functioning in September 1989.

The traditional school schedule has been changed to a modular structure that reflects more of a nine-period structure. The schedule enables teams to function within larger instructional blocks over which they may plan and exercise the allocation of instructional time. Common blocks of time within team schedules and across team schedules by grade levels provide a great deal of opportunity to exercise flexibility in the allocation of time and scheduling of students. One period is devoted to providing corrective and enrichment experiences for students. Another common period for all seventh- and eighth-graders is

designated as an activity period during which a variety of mini-courses, nontraditional exploratory experiences, and elective activities are provided (implemented September 1988).

Traditional tracking has been eliminated, with heterogeneous grouping as the norm for all courses of study except mathematics. The transition from homogeneous to heterogeneous grouping has been a three-year process. Within these structural changes, the school has committed itself to the enhancement of positive thinking and self-esteem for both staff and students. Climate and interpersonal skills have become major emphases.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

❖ ❖ ❖

DISTRICT: Hicksville School District #17
SCHOOL: Hicksville Middle School
ADDRESS: Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801
TELEPHONE: (516) 933-6521
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 679
CONTACT: Gerald Klein, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

During the past four years, Hicksville Junior High School has been transformed from a traditional mini-high school to a middle school. From the outset in 1985, the motivation for effecting this change was a shared belief among a group of teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders that the need existed for an educational process that would serve to meet the unique needs of the student population in the middle-level grades. Following a year of intense study and discussion, this group, the Secondary Study Committee, issued a report to the Superintendent recommending a major restructuring of the program for seventh and eighth-graders. A major concern of some committee members was that although the Board of Education might embrace the spirit of the restructuring, they would fail to demonstrate real commitment by providing necessary financial support and a willingness to provide time and resources for an effective orientation and staff development program. There were also concerns expressed with respect to contractual implications of forming interdisciplinary teams and providing for common planning periods. The expected commitment, however, was made clear to the Board, and they responded by actively supporting the process from initiation to full implementation.

The second year of the transformation was devoted to establishing an awareness of the need for a transformed program among parents, students, and community leaders, listening to concerns and allaying common fears (e.g., the academic program would be sacrificed in an effort to focus on emotional and social development). In addition, a major staff development project was instituted. This involved an initial orientation to middle school philosophy. The services of a nationally recognized consultant, Dr. Conrad Toepfer, who was able to explain concepts and cite practical examples, was most helpful in establishing credibility. Teachers had to not only discover the findings of researchers but also be assured that colleagues elsewhere were actually implementing these changes in classrooms without compromising their mission as secondary educators. Other phases of the staff development project included the formation of interdisciplinary teams, the training of selected team members in group dynamics, the restructuring of curriculums in order to provide time for teams to plan together to ensure a smooth opening in September.

Schools seeking to make the transformation should understand that providing ample time for staff development is crucial to the success of their mission. It is very important to implement a change in a smooth and efficient manner in order to avoid criticism that really deals with process rather than substance.

In addition to staff development activities aimed specifically at preparing teachers for the transformation, a major initiative throughout the year was to broaden parent awareness and understanding of how the change would benefit their children, the home and the community. This was accomplished by scheduling visitations to middle school conferences (a group of teachers, parents, and community leaders attended the N.A.S.S.P. Middle-Level Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia) and middle schools already in operation. Information discussions with teachers and parents of other communities were extremely effective in promoting trust and belief in the project. A number of forums were held at various geographic locations within the community to share information, answer questions, and address concerns. In January, an orientation meeting for the parents of incoming youngsters provided an opportunity for parents to inquire further and to hear of specific plans that were being developed directly from the interdisciplinary teams. The feeling that the teachers supported that idea and knew where they were headed was instrumental in building widespread parent support.

A final key to the successful transformation was the establishment of the Middle School Advisory Council -a consultation group to deal with anticipated and real problems, to develop solutions, and to plan for implementation of specific recommendations. This group has served as the center for introducing and refining programs that speak to the recommendations of the Regents Policy Statement. It provides on-going development in order to expand in areas of success and revise in areas of failure. Recently, the M.S.A.C. has led to the formation of a subgroup, the MAC Committee (Melius-Altius-Citius) that serves as a school improvement planning team specifically with respect to issues of curriculum and instruction.

In summary, a successful transformation is accomplished when

there is an understood need for change on the part of all constituencies affected by the school program and a uniform commitment to implementing that change. In addition, sufficient time and resources must be allocated to community awareness and staff development efforts. Finally, by providing a mechanism for ongoing program evaluation and revision, as well as shared decision making, "ownership" in the process and shared pride in its success can be generated.

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DISTRICT: Islip Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Islip Middle School
ADDRESS: 211 Main Street
Islip, NY 11751
TELEPHONE: (516) 581-2560
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 886
CONTACT: James Collins, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

All 85 teachers in the Islip Middle School are organized into teams. This organization includes academic, exploratory, special, and elementary teachers. Each of the 11 teams is headed by a team liaison. These leaders meet with the building administration once a week to share mutual concerns and communicate information. The school uses a nine-period instructional day, with 44-minute periods including "passing" time. A 40-minute period is held each day before school for music programs and voluntary enrichment in athletics as well as an accelerated art course.

A fully implemented Peer Tutoring program is in operation and meets each week after school. Honor program students offer help to 5th through 8th grade students in mathematics, science, social studies, and English. The school has a study skills program for 5th and 6th grade students. "Islip Marches Ahead" is a plan devised and instituted to demonstrate the importance of social development through tangible recognition of good behavior. The reward system has been constructed to reach as many of the students as possible. At its base are yellow coupons printed with "IMA Winner." Any staff member can issue one at any time to a student exhibiting admirable behavior, and the student can redeem them for prizes. Concerned Adults Really Empathize (CARE) has been implemented by the Guidance Department to meet the needs of individual students. Volunteers from the faculty and staff contact "at risk" students on a regular basis to offer compassionate and supportive encouragement.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

❖ ❖ ❖

DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis Tosetto, Principal
Robert Smith, Building Curriculum Coordinator
Janice Powell, 6th Grade Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

The Lewiston-Porter Middle School concept was developed by a group of junior high school staff members, parents, and the principal who served together as a task force at the request of the Board of Education. The task force initiated research and school visitations for teachers and parents. All junior high school teachers and many parents visited a variety of recommended middle schools within a day's drive of our school district. The task force developed evaluation formats for each component of its work including school visitations. Comprehensive reports were submitted to the Board of Education and the school community. Formal and informal parent and teacher networks were established to provide two-way communication. Prior to initiation of new program components, team-building activities were initiated. A clear middle school mission statement and philosophy were written and adopted by the school staff and parent members of the task force. Specific goals and objectives were agreed to and publicized. Over the past several years, the middle school staff has used faculty meeting time to meet in small groups to institute these objectives and develop new ones. Each faculty meeting begins with a brief update from each committee and ends with a brief written evaluation.

A shared decision-making model developed by the Lewiston-Porter Middle School staff is used to set school objectives and meet identified needs. The majority of scheduled middle school faculty meetings are work meetings where the staff meets in small committee groups to complete specific objectives agreed to beforehand. At the end of each meeting, each group presents a brief oral report stating its progress to date. All participants also complete a brief, written evaluation form after each work session. The evaluation results are shared with all participants.

The shared decision-making process promotes academic excellence within the staff by promoting a feeling of belonging and a sense of personal identification with the school. It helps staff members to feel that they are productive members of the organization and, through active participation in decision making, group ownership is engendered.

Lewiston-Porter Middle School teacher leaders establish power breakfasts that take place one half hour before the regular school day begins. All middle school staff are invited to attend

in order to hear one or more of their colleagues tell of a promising practice that they either use or learned about from another source. The promising practice must be one that can be initiated immediately. The 30-minute breakfast includes coffee, juice, and pastry and is paid for by the school district.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE: 1-5 years

❖ ❖ ❖

DISTRICT: Not Applicable
SCHOOL: New York State School Boards Association
ADDRESS: 119 Washington Avenue
Albany NY 12210
TELEPHONE: (518) 465-3474
GRADE SPAN: Not Applicable **ENROLLMENT:** Not Applicable
CONTACT: Karen M. Kanarkiewicz, Research Assistant

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

The New York State School Boards Association has a Policy Services Department that provides school districts with comprehensive, up-to-date information on issues regarding board of education policies. The department offers this information in three principal forms: Law Management Policies for Schools (LAMPS), custom policy reviews, and custom policy manuals.

LAMPS is a three-volume reference manual containing background discussions of important legal and educational issues concerning the governance and operation of public schools. In addition, LAMPS contains suggested policies and administrative regulations on many subjects, including those associated with middle-level education. Custom Policy Reviews provide suggestions on what is needed to make the board's policies more comprehensive, up-to-date, and reflective of district practices, including middle-level education. For those districts desiring more in-depth help in developing or updating their own policy manual, the department offers a Custom Manual Service for developing a manual that is tailored to the needs of the district.

The services of the New York State School Boards Association may be especially useful to districts that are addressing policy questions at the middle level.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

Until about six years ago, the Newark Central School had a traditional junior high school. A modular A-B-C-D type schedule was followed, which rotated 55-minute classes to utilize as much space as possible. The administration tended to be authoritative and traditional. The junior high was a mini-high school with an orientation around academics.

The major factors in bringing about a change were frustrations among teachers, feelings of isolation, an inability to deal with changes in the student body and society, and concern for children. There were a number of people who worked to facilitate the transformation to a middle school. The Board of Education perceived a need for students to meet with their teachers every day, not on a rotating schedule. The hiring of new administrators brought new ideas into the structure. And the staff itself was willing to take the risk to experiment with new ideas and make them work. The Middle School Committee became very active. They presented a slideshow to the faculty and designed an entire day around Dr. James Garvin's presentation on middle-level education. There was a parent task force committee who helped in making the evening a success. The students were also involved in providing babysitting services for community members who came to the evening presentation and in acting as guides throughout the building. Dr. Garvin spoke about characteristics that make our students different and how we can help these students adjust to a difficult period in their lives. Two major changes were team teaching and the beginning of the Effective Schools movement. Three committees were also formed: the Building Planning Team, a Middle School Committee, and a Heterogeneous Grouping Committee. Some training was provided for the staff in the form of awareness, workshops, and visitations to exemplary middle schools. As a result of teaming, the schedule was changed to a nine-period day with shorter periods and provisions for a common planning time for teachers on the same teams. As the teams started to place more of an emphasis on the needs of students, visit other schools, and implement ideas, they found that they were indeed becoming a middle school. The official name change from junior high to middle school did not occur until about five years later. This coincided with a 50th- year anniversary celebration where there were many activities and much involvement by the staff, students, and community.

There have been a few problems. The new team scheduling needed more staffing, which required a larger monetary com-

mitment from the community. Another problem is that the special-area teachers still have the feeling of isolation. This occured because even though they were assigned to a team, they did not get the opportunity to meet daily with all the teachers who shared their students. A major test of the strength of the middle school program came about with the process of removing asbestos from the building. Even though the staff had to leave behind their materials and adjust to split sessions in a shared building, the staff triumphed. The teaming concept became even more important in establishing an identify for teachers and students alike in this new and far-from-perfect situation. The library helped in providing information that was needed for the teams to research current philosophies of middle level education. There was much use of the interlibrary system and duplication and circulation of professional magazine articles. Another resource needed was release time for teachers to visit exemplary middle schools. In addition, guest speakers were brought in to address the staff. As the middle school philosophy began to emerge, the image of the school began to change in the eyes of the students, teachers, and community. The student council was responsible for a new sign being placed in front of the building reading Newark Middle School.

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School
ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3251
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1001
CONTACT: Alice M. Gordon, Principal/Associate Superintendent

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

With the closing of one junior high school in 1987, 7th and 8th grade students were joined in one building. At its Dec. 1, 1988, meeting, the North Babylon Board of Education reached a consensus to create a 6th through 8th grade middle school at the Robert Moses JHS beginning in September 1989. There were three major reasons for initiating this change. They were: 1.) a better education for North Babylon students, 2.) consolidation due to declining enrollment, and 3.) budgetary considerations.

The planning process began with a task force made up of 50 members. This "Committee of 50" was composed of administrative and teaching personnel, and PTA and civic group representatives. It was co-chaired by the Director of Elementary Education and a member of the North Babylon Teacher Union. After considering a large body of research, the committee unanimously recommended moving to a middle school.

The resources needed to create the middle school varied. The number one resource used for the planning of the middle school was brain power. Everyone's experience was used. Secondly, the associate superintendent applied for and received a $60,000 state grant for equipment. Third, there was support from all segments of the community and staff. Fourth, staff development money was used to bring in speakers immediately. Dr. Howard Johnson, authority on middle school child behavior, gave a presentation to both the staff and the community.

The next step involved forming a core committee of professionals to the middle school. This core committee was composed of central office administrators, the middle school principal, the union president, an elementary principal, and an elementary teacher. A calendar was established and the committee began its work by listing the major considerations. These considerations involved such challenges as the delivery system, staffing, etc. A mission statement was the first order of business.

The second stage involved orientations for both community and staff. A letter was sent to the residents explaining the decision to move to middle school and the work of the middle school committee. Another letter was sent inviting all the community to a meeting. In addition, the superintendent sent all staff a memorandum informing them of the board's decision, and they also received a letter detailing the decision with the intended time line.

The assistant superintendent for personnel sent out an interest data sheet to all professional staff soliciting response from those who wished to teach at the 6th grade level. Even though all volunteers had to go through a screening and interview process, there were more candidates than positions. After the final staffing decisions were made, special meetings were established for the full staff. Speakers from several neighboring middle schools addressed various topics pertinent to this grouping.

Meanwhile, the core committee met with each PTA executive board at their individual schools, and representatives of the PTA were invited to the Robert Moses Middle School to meet with the principal.

The major problems encountered were: 1.) staff and community acceptance; 2.) building facilities; 3.) combining elementary and junior high procedures. All major problems were resolved through solid communication. At the first public meeting, the auditorium was filled with community members. The district plan was explained in detail and the parents left satisfied and supportive. After several PTA and group meetings, there was a whole community meeting in the spring.

Staff acceptance was encouraged through communication, inclusion, and staff development. The staff was kept informed throughout the entire process, and the program was explained to them in great depth. Staff development was always a major consideration.

A facility committee was formed to deal with any space problems created with the influx of 350 6th grade students and the additional programs needed for the middle school. The committee also met with the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds. The committee surveyed the educational needs and the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds implemented them.

Combining elementary school procedures and procedures for 7th and 8th grade is an ongoing process. It was necessary to form subcommittees to attend to such topics as the elementary report cards. Staff input and flexibility have helped ease the process. An in-school middle school committee has been formed and a special 6th grade committee has also been established.

There are, of course, many caveats in retrospect. It is important to keep the community and the staff involved at all times. Listen carefully to them and try to incorporate their suggestions. Have an extensive student orientation. Be prepared to adjust and bring in all the experts in your organization: the director of special education, the director of music, etc. Have trust in the professionals. The superintendent and the North Babylon Board of Education placed their trust in the professional judgment of the core committee at all times. This was so important to the process. Last, but most important, always think about the students and what is best for them.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Oceanside Central School District
SCHOOL: Oceanside Middle School
ADDRESS: Alice & Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
TELEPHONE: (516) 678-1200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 810
CONTACT: Enid D'Arrigo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

In Oceanside, the idea to transform a junior high to a middle school developed as an outgrowth of declining enrollment and a total district reorganization plan. Specifically, the decision was made to reshape the district to five K-6 elementary schools, one 7-8 middle school, and one 9-12 high school. (Previously, there had existed six K-6 elementary schools, two 7-9 junior high schools, and one 10-12 high school.)

A task force composed of teachers, parents, and administrators was formed to "rethink" middle-level education. Groups of people visited middle schools both on Long Island and in New York State and brought back those ideas they considered to be essential elements of a good middle school. This included the notion of "teaming," a rotating schedule, the inclusion of a full exploratory program for students, opportunities for flexible grouping, common planning time for teachers, heterogeneous grouping, student and teacher ownership, etc. The planning period was one year in duration. During that time, the Board of Education appointed a project director to facilitate implementation of the program.

Community opposition was strong, particularly to the idea of heterogeneous grouping. The junior high school had been organized into three tracks (Honors, Average, and Low). The project director met with groups of parents from each elementary school on a regular basis explaining each aspect of the program. After much discussion, the district administrators agreed to a complex plan of scheduling that would permit students to be grouped together for accelerated mathematics and then regrouped for the remainder of the program.

Teachers volunteered to work at the middle school and were given the opportunity to select their teammates. The role of the department chairperson expanded to include that of team leader.

Community concern was so strong that the Board of Education made the decision to evaluate the program. A two-year evaluation of the middle school program was made by a team of professors from Teachers College and their doctoral students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Rensselaer City School District
SCHOOL: Rensselaer Middle School
ADDRESS: 555 Broadway
Rensselaer, NY 12144
TELEPHONE: (518) 436-8561
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Michael Dawkins, Principal
William Glasbrener, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

Four years ago, the Rensselaer City School District transformed a traditional junior high school into a middle-level school that reflects the Regents Policy Statement. The reorganization was a joint faculty and administrators project and was accomplished is less than one year.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Scarsdale Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Scarsdale Junior High School
ADDRESS: Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
TELEPHONE: (914) 472-3478
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 840
CONTACT: Peter Telfer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

Scarsdale Junior High School had housed students in grades 6-8 for 21 years, but it was a traditional junior high school program and organization. In 1978-79, the sixth-graders were sent back to their five elementary schools due to a decline in the elementary school enrollment and because of dissatisfaction with the junior high program. The staff and community took this as an opportunity to reorganize grades 7 and 8 based on a middle school philosophy.

In the 1977-78 school year, the staff worked with consultants, visited other schools and agreed to make significant changes in the program and organization for the 1978-79 school year. They organized around three academic houses with an interdisciplinary team for grade 7 and grade 8 in each house and an alternative program for grades 7/8 for about 55 students. There was a great deal of communication with the school board and community. After the first year, significant changes were made in the schedule to allow even more flexibility based on the needs of middle-level students. The program was so successful that the sixth-graders were sent back to the junior high in 1987-88, and it is once again a school for students in grades 6-8.

The school has three academic houses with teams at each grade level made up of an English, social studies, science, and mathematics teacher. The teachers have common planning time and meet regularly with a house counselor and support services. The teams rotate their schedule daily and control the groupings. Every trimester, the entire school schedule is rotated. Special-subject teachers are encouraged to interact with the academic teachers.

It is important to educate the community about the nature of the age group and to show how the program and organization is based on the unique needs of the pre- and early-adolescent. The sixth-graders belong with seventh- and eighth-graders, and parents need to know this.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

The Skaneateles Middle School was transformed during the 1985-86 school year from a departmentalized junior high school, grades 7 and 8, to a middle school, grades 7 and 8. At the beginning of the 1989-90 school year, the 6th grade was added to the program.

In the initial change (during the 1984-85 school year), a representative group of faculty members worked on the planning committee. The superintendent and the Board of Education supported the change from its inception. The principal who was hired had three years' experience as an assistant principal at Eagle Hill Middle School, which had been recognized in the first year of the State Schools of Excellence program.

Contacts were made to several existing middle schools, with follow-up visits to some of the schools. The program was synthesized from the information we gathered. Meetings were held with the entire staff throughout the process to keep them informed. The report was presented to the Board in the spring of 1985 for their approval.

During the winter and spring of 1989, the move of the 6th grade was planned because of a space problem at the elementary level. The entire 6th grade staff and elementary administrator worked with the middle school principal to organize the transition. The plan was presented to the Board in May of 1989. An orientation for parents was held in May, one for students was conducted late in August before school opened.

Overall, both transitions took place very smoothly.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Syosset Central School District
SCHOOL: H.B. Thompson Middle School
South Woods Middle School
ADDRESS: Syosset, NY 11791
TELEPHONE: (516) 921-5500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1253
CONTACT: Stephen P. Neidell, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

In its desire to institute two middle schools from the then pre-

sent two junior high schools, the Syosset Central School District engaged in a carefully planned developmental process that allowed for the transition to occur. A district reorganization steering committee was established in five areas: elementary school, middle school, high school, special education, and support services. The middle school committee, comprised of 17 members, was further subdivided into five areas of study: curriculum content, schedule and program, instructional format, activities, and staffing. The involvement of more than 50 staff members provided a positive atmosphere and gave staff a sense of ownership. Committee work was accomplished over a period of 13 months. After the "Interim Report" was submitted, approximately 10 months prior to implementation, a series of meetings were scheduled to inform the community of the impending changes.

The key components in implementing the middle school program were:

- Staff involvement
- Utilization of a developmental process
- Community awareness.

A systematic implementation of the middle school program resulted in the smooth transition from two junior high schools to two middle schools. The careful involvement of staff followed by detailed presentations to the school community allowed the middle schools to open their doors in September 1986 as if they had always been a part of the Syosset Central School District.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Troy City School District
SCHOOL: W. K. Doyle Middle School
ADDRESS: 1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
TELEPHONE: (518) 271-5352
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 782
CONTACT: James M. Gorman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

During the 1987-88 school year, the faculty and staff of the W. K. Doyle Middle School reached consensus through PAC (Principal's Advisory Council) to alter the environment so that it would better reflect that of a true middle school. The major reason for initiation of this change was certainly to better meet the needs of the students. In addition, there was an underlying desire to become a school of excellence and, in order to reach that objective, to provide a true middle school environment. The planning process was accomplished primarily through PAC under the guideline of the effective school movement. There were 13 members of PAC who researched the literature, attended conferences, visited schools, and attended seminars. The time line was very tight, with weekly meetings starting in September resulting in the beginning of a school-within-a-school team approach to instruction in September 1989. The decision to go with a team approach was made very early in 1987. In order to make the transition, major decisions had to be made. The first step was to discuss the goal with the Superintendent, who embraced the concept of teaming; in the numerous meetings that followed, the Superintendent continued to give guidance and support. The next step was to convince the Board of Education that the school-within-a-school team concept was the best way to effectively educate our students; it was necessary for them to support the school's efforts and appropriate the required funds to allow for the transition.

In November 1987, the Board of Education agreed with the concepts and directed the administration to submit a feasible proposal, listing the minimum modifications needed. The proposal required the elimination of 400 student lockers, the addition of a new counseling suite, the addition of eight new classrooms, and the reduction of office space to provide for the new classrooms. This proposal came in at a fair price and was unanimously accepted by the Board. The construction began the last day in June. All renovations were made and the building was ready in September. In addition to the building construction, a complete revamping of the Master Schedule was necessary to take care of teaming needs and to meet compliance with the Regents Action Plan. The 1988-89 school year with the school-within-a-school team concept proved to be very successful. The environment in the building changed; the teachers were more aware of individual student needs, and the students seem more relaxed and comfortable in the adjusted environment.

Our Mission Statement is:

> The W. Kenneth Doyle Middle School exists as a learning environment that promotes harmony in the middle grades, with the understanding that the early adolescent has unique needs. This environment provides a student-centered program fostering the self-worth of each child by meeting his or her physical, academic, social-emotional, and organizational needs.
>
> The school-within-a-school team approach to instruction assures that equal opportunity exists for each student to be challenged to the fullest extent of his or her ability. Upon leaving our middle school community, the young lady or gentleman will have bridged the gap between the protected and directed structure of the elementary school to the independent and self-reliant atmosphere of the high school.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Wappingers Central School District
SCHOOL: Van Wyck and Wappings Falls Junior High Schools
ADDRESS: 15 Myers Corners Road
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
TELEPHONE: (914) 298-3610
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** Not reported
CONTACT: Roberta Rinaldo, Coordinator of Special Projects

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: a

Wappingers Central School District, a district of 11,000 students covering 25 square miles, is in the process of converting to middle schools. Previously it was a district composed of 10 elementaries, two junior highs, and two senior highs. At present, all of the nineth-graders have moved into the senior highs. The two middle-level buildings house all of the district's seventh- and eighth-graders and some of the sixth-graders. Seven elementaries still house grade 6. The initial reason for considering the changes was increasing enrollment at the elementary level. The planning process is based on a model by Wiles and Bondi. The district has several committees: staff development, transition advisory, design, and program. The design committee is the busy one, having completed a philosophy and a mission statement and in the process of developing middle school goals. Housing recommendations have been made by the design committee, and the priority task for the near future is to tackle the structure of the 6th grade program and subsequent staffing implications. The major problem at present is estimating the costs of our venture. Once this is done, convincing the community to support what appears to be an expensive change will be a challenge.

A problem the district frequently has in this change process is parent resistance. In order to minimize problems, the district has had many meetings with parents prior to the movement of the first groups of sixth-graders into the middle-level buildings. Parents were invited to tour the buildings during school hours so they could be assured that learning was taking place in a happy but disciplined environment. The pioneer sixth-graders had such a successful experience that parents fears were reduced.

A major emphasis in the planning has been on "slow and thorough."

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Wayland Central School District
SCHOOL: Wayland Central School
ADDRESS: 2350 Route 63
Wayland, NY 14572
TELEPHONE: (716) 728-2211
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 230
CONTACT PERSON: Thomas A. Dutchess, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: a

At the present time, Wayland Central School is a K-12 system with a school within a school within a school concept having been implemented in grades seven and eight, and a plan to create the same setting in grades five and six. A 10-period day benefits students and staff. This schedule allows students to meet all of the requirements of the Regents Action Plan and at the same time permits the teacher to teach six periods a day without any additional supervisory duties. Special monitors supervise study halls, lunch periods, etc. freeing the teacher from those responsibilities.

A teacher's schedule consists of teaching six periods, an individual preparation period, a team planning period, a lunch period and a tenth period which is an instructional assistance period designed for student enrichment or remediation. Teams of teachers exist in both the seventh and eighth grades. The teams are comprised of teachers representing all subject areas. Each teacher on the teams has a schedule which provides him or her with a period of time when all team members can meet on a daily basis. This designated time allows the teams to plan an integrated curriculum, establish testing schedule, discuss specific student problems, meet with support staff, administration, and parents, etc. Time spent together is critical for the continuity of this program. For the past two summers funds have been available for curriculum work. This time gives the teams an opportunity to organize their programs for the coming school year.

A teacher from one of the teams volunteers to coordinate the teams efforts. This individual's schedule is tailored to provide the individual with a personal planning period plus two team planning periods. A job description exists for this person. The responsibilities of the coordinator include facilitating all meetings, establishing the agenda for the monthly calendar, setting-up and facilitating meetings with parents, recording minutes of each team meeting, etc. In addition to the responsibilities associated with teaching, each team member volunteers to monitor the individual progress of ten to twelve students at his or her particular grade level. Monitoring the improvement of a student requires that the teacher meet with that student periodically to discuss that student's progress, confer with other members of the team as to the student's achievement, communicate with members of the guidance department relative to the student's preliminary competency test scores, scheduling for the next year, and communication with the parents. The primary reason for this system of monitoring is to stress the positive with the students, resulting in building a higher level of self-confidence for students in grade 5 through 8. The effective school's theme at Wayland Central is *Excellence Nothing Less*

- "Care enough to expect the best." The teams planned special activities for each grade level which represented a collaborative effort between all departments. The seventh grade team organized and presented for the students an Iroquois Corn Harvest Festival Day. The eighth grade team organized and presented a day for the students entitled "The Great Tin Can Rally" with turn of the century costumes, food, candy shops, music, antiques, and women's suffrage campaign, a presidential election, and, of course, The Great Race with tin cans. These activities stirred the enthusiasm and interest of the students and challenged the creativity of the teams. Both were pronounced a success.

Concerns addressed before modifications were considered in the scheduling, teaching load, length of periods, number of periods, types of planning periods, team teaching were: the self-esteem of the target population, identity of the same population, integration of curricula, student failure rate, eventual drop-out rate, and teacher collaboration.

The success of the program would mean: an increase in the self-esteem of the participants, a feeling within the seventh and eighth grades of their own identify, a coordination of efforts in curriculum development, a decrease in the number of students failing subjects in those grade levels, a decrease in the drop-out rate, and more cooperation among team members.

The end of the year evaluation of the program by the teams indicated that:

1. Seventh and eighth grades did feel better about themselves and did feel special because of the program and the recognition and publicity they received as a result of their involvement in the program.
2. The curricula guidelines written by the teams had helped in the development of a better understanding among team members as to what each individual teacher taught.
3. Statistics at the end of the school year showed a 50 percent decrease in the number of students in seventh and eighth grade failing subjects as compared to the three previous years.
4. The team members reported at the end of the school year that each team had become a support group. The growth of each team member was difficult to measure, but it was felt that each had grown professionally because of their daily interaction with other team members.
5. The effect on the drop out rate was impossible to determine at the time.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

Area b

Establishing "Houses" or Schools-Within-Schools in Buildings Where the Total Student Population Is Large

For schools with middle-level grades interested in implementing the recommendations contained in the Regents Policy Statement, several examples and models of alternative organizational approaches (houses, halls, schools-within-schools) that promote a feeling of family and reduce the feeling of anonymity among students are described in this section.

Area b: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bedford Central School District
  Fox Lane Middle School
- Central Islip Public Schools
  Ralph G. Reed Junior High School
- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- Community School District #13
  Ronald Edmonds Learning Center
- Community School District #27
  Elizabeth Blackwell Junior High School 210
- Community School District #27
  Intermediate School 53
- Community School District #27
  Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
- Community School District #28
  Stephan A. Halsey Junior High School 157
- Guilderland Central School District
  Farnsworth Middle School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Lancaster Central School District
  Aurora Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Oswego City School District
  Oswego Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Scarsdale Union Free School District
  Scarsdale Junior High School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- Troy City School District
  W. K. Doyle Middle School

DISTRICT: Bedford Central School District
SCHOOL: The Fox Lane Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 172
Bedford, NY 10506
TELEPHONE: (914) 241-6126
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Dennis McGrath, Director

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREA: b

In 1961, the Bedford Central School District faced a crisis of overcrowding in its elementary schools and its junior-senior high school. It was obvious that a building in the middle had to be constructed. Exercising extraordinary vision, the district developed a model for a school in the middle based on emerging research and input from a variety of sources. A philosophy was first established upon which the school was constructed.

The Fox Lane Middle School was founded in 1966 upon a philosophy that was based on the needs of the 11-to 14-year-old child. In designing the physical complex, those needs and that philosophy were strongly considered. Students at Fox Lane are assigned to one of two houses in separate buildings designed to accommodate three teams of approximately 100 students per team. The house becomes the students' home base, where their academic teachers are located along with their guidance counselor and house coordinator. They locate their locker there, their records, eat lunch there, and develop a personal identity with that house.

The students leave their house for classes in foreign language, music, unified arts, and physical education, which are located in separate buildings.

TAP

The concept of The Alternative Program (TAP) developed from an awareness that students learn in different ways and may require different learning environments. Many students are successful in the traditional large team setting, while others perform better in a smaller environment.

TAP, composed of 25-30 7th and 8th grade students, is an intimate learning community designed to meet the needs of the "alternative" learner. Small classes and flexibility in scheduling provide excellent opportunities for close student/teacher interaction.

Curriculum development is collaborative and interdisciplinary, with all TAP faculty participating. Similar concepts are taught in each subject area, reinforcing that all learning is connected.

TAP students actively participate in their own government, electing officers and conducting meetings. This fosters a sense of responsibility for the community, develops leadership skills, promotes personal citizenship, and invests the student in group problem-solving.

The Alternative Program (TAP) is an innovative approach to middle-level education that stresses the development of the whole child. Interdisciplinary units emphasize the connection of all academic areas. Teacher/advisor programs allow opportunities for self-definition and self-development; community government allows students to invest in their own decision-making. The family atmosphere provides support for the adolescent while at the same time encouraging a sense of responsibility and risk-taking.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: TAP - 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE .

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DISTRICT: Central Islip Public Schools
SCHOOL: Ralph G. Reed Jr. High School
ADDRESS: Half Mile Road
Central Islip, NY 11722
TELEPHONE: (516) 348-5066
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 794
CONTACT: Joseph Orobona, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The 8th grade House Plan is an outgrowth of the Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (AI/DP) Program. Begun in September 1987, the House Plan comprises four subject-area teachers (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) and one guidance counselor. One assistant principal meets regularly with the team and monitors its goals and activities.

All House Plan students are in the 8th grade. Students in the house are selected during their 7th grade year. The students are recommended by teachers, guidance counselors, the AI/DP counselor, and the Building Level Team. The Building Level Team discusses all recommended students and prioritizes them based on the following criteria: failing grades (two or more subjects) and the inclusion of at least two of the following characteristics - slow learner, one or more years below reading level, lack of motivation, lack of maturity, poor attendance, or rejection by the Committee on Special Education. Students with disruptive and aggressive behavior are not considered appropriate candidates.

The House is limited to 20 students. The students meet daily with the four subject-area teachers and on a regular basis with the counselor. They are "mainstreamed" for all their special classes and lunch.

The teachers have a common preparation period. Weekly meetings, for the purpose of setting goals and objectives and for planning subsequent activities, are held during this period.

These meetings are also used to monitor student progress and to meet with parents.

The program is attractive because it can be instituted with a minimum cost and with no disruption of a typical school schedule.

Costs associated with the program are those generated by special activities planned by the teachers and students. Many of these activities are covered by fund-raisers that the students organize. Further, the student and teacher schedules fit neatly into the overall school schedule. The students are housed not so much by location as by identification with a program that is tailored to their needs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

Columbus Academy was established with clear purpose and guidelines. It was to have a teacher-director, eight teachers, and a cap of 180 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. It was to be housed in an existing junior high school building that would subsequently be broken up into mini-schools. Columbus Academy was to be nontraditional and based on a "middle school" philosophy. A unique feature has been that each of the teachers teaches in a minimum of three different although possibly related disciplines. It was to be semi-autonomous. Control over staffing, student enrollment, philosophy, and scheduling was to lie within Columbus Academy. Unlike the other subschools of The O'Shea Complex (the school in which we are housed) Columbus Academy's budget comes directly from the Superintendent's Office.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Community School District #13
SCHOOL: Ronald Edmonds Learning Center
ADDRESS: 300 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn, NY 11205
TELEPHONE: (718) 824-6778
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 750
CONTACT: Beverly Hall, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The concept of "schools-within-schools" orginated in Community School District 13B in 1988 with the establishment of four satellite junior high schools. Today, the district's junior high schools are comprised of 16 unique programs. Each program has 200 to 250 students. Program coordinators are responsible for a staff of 8 to 12 teachers. The small programs have the basic mandated academic curriculum, which is enriched by a special talent or junior high school accelerated course of study. The schools have been successful in creating an atomosphere of pride and belonging for the teachers and students. The Ronald Edmonds Learning Center consists of five subschools. In addition to the academic curriculum, there are course offerings in dance, drama, instrumental and vocal music, journalism, advertising, art, computers, audio-visual productions, and word processing.

The mainstreaming of students with special needs is enthusiastically supported, and students are integrated throught the shcool building. Teacher teams, headed by a teacher coordinator, share the responsibility for the education and personal development of a common group of students. The subschool setting has created a family atmosphere and motivates students and teachers to excel. For many students, attending smaller schools has been a key to improving academic achievement and developing special talents.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Elizabeth Blackwell Jr. High School 210
ADDRESS: 93-11 101st Avenue
Ozone Park, NY 11416
TELEPHONE: (718) 845-5942
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 120
CONTACT: John Falco, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The Mini School Program at JHS 201Q brings together the A.I.D.P. Program, the Promotional Gates Program, the Special Education Program, and the Main Stream Program in an integrated and effective manner. Through the input teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and academic profiles, this program identifies and treats the underlying causes for students' failure

rather than the symptoms of the students' failures. The primary goal of the mini school is to build self-esteem and self worth in our students and thus reverse the cycle of negative reinforcement. The mini school consists of three 8th grade classes and three 7th grade classes. There are seven subject teachers, a teacher-coordinator, and a guidance counselor, all of whom contribute to the individual student's plan. Learning takes place through classroom instruction and numerous incentive school trips. An integral part of the Mini School Program is the monthly Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences. These conferences assist in the monitoring of the students' program and in the developing of a strong partnership and with the home, which enables us to better serve the students.

Within recent years, many programs have been developed and instituted that focus on students' specific needs. Yet, many of these youngsters still experience failure, become discouraged, lose interest, and "drop out." There is a core of students within these various programs whose needs are overlapping, but are being treated independently of one another because of a diagnosis based upon symptoms (absenteeism, low reading scores, learning disability). Low esteem, self-image, self-respect are underlying cases for failure and nonachievement. The Mini School Program is a much-needed child-oriented program functioning within a curriculum-oriented middle school. It is an integration of programs and/or services. Unlike individual programs which can be so specific that they limit their effectiveness, the Mini School Program pools these resources and maximizes the delivery of services to the students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Intermediate School 53
ADDRESS: 1045 Nameoke Street
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
TELEPHONE (718) 471-6900
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1500
CONTACT: Stan Simon, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

A 6th grade "mini-school" was set up within the IS 53Q structure. The grade was staffed with an assistant principal, a coordinator, a dean, a guidance counselor, and 32 teachers. Isolated from the rest of the school, the program provided a myriad of services in academic remediation, enrichment, and guidance. Teachers were provided time for team planning and conferences. Class size was kept to a maximum of 26 students. All staff "adopted" problem children and met with them on a regular basis to discuss problems and solutions. In addition, classroom teams (two teachers) taught the four major subjects, limiting movement and more closely replicating the elementary school experience.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
ADDRESS: 320 Beach 104 Street
Rockaway Beach, NY 11694
TELEPHONE: (718) 945-2700
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,000
CONTACT: Ilana Block, School Research Institute

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The *Scholar Research Institute* at JHS 180Q is a school-within-a-school that currently serves a group of 150 potentially gifted and talented students. The SRI students are drawn from the pool of students normally slated to attend JHS 180. They were identified for this program by a gifted-education consultant, in cooperation with Columbia University's Teachers College, and district and school-based professionals.

The students in the SRI program share most of the same teachers; their classrooms are strategically located as near to each other as possible; they participate in enrichment activities and trips as a group, and they are encouraged to interact as "family" members in order to reduce the feelings of anonymity that often arise in large, urban intermediate/junior high schools.

The initial class of the SRI participated in the creation of a logo to represent the program. This logo can be found on stationery, student jackets, bookcovers, etc. Similar projects foster feelings of identification and belonging.

The SRI is an example of a program that was implemented with the least possible upheaval in the total school's functioning. The results have indicated that with careful planning it is possible to pilot a "school-within-a-school" without alienating those students and staff members not directly involved in the program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #28

SCHOOL: Stephen A. Halsey Junior High School 157
ADDRESS: 102nd Street & 64th Avenue
Rego Park, NY 11374
TELEPHONE: (718) 830-4910
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,200
CONTACT: Kathleen Ponze, Teacher, Cluster Grant Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

Five 7th grade classes are housed in five contiguous classrooms with five major subject teachers. The children travel outside this cluster for gym, specials (minor subjects), lunch, library, etc. The five teachers have waived class-size restrictions through a school-based option so the students can be grouped as is most appropriate. Because of the location of the cluster, programming can be modified from time to time for extended homeroom or double periods in a subject class. The five teachers have three common periods each day. The 7th grade dean, guidance counselor, and grade coordinator are also available for consultations.

This "cluster" of five classes eases the transition from elementary to junior high school by making a 1,200 pupil institution more manageable. The common time for the teachers promotes communication, and collegiality and provides a sound basis for shared decision making. Students receive more individualized attention from a group of adults who consult on a daily basis. Parents get more accurate and focused feedback. It is our feeling that this change in organization best meets the needs of the children.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Guilderland Central School District
SCHOOL: Farnsworth Middle School
ADDRESS: State Farm Road
Guilderland, NY 12084
TELEPHONE: (518) 456-6080
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1312
CONTACT: Joseph E. Purcell, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

In this grade 5-8 middle school of approximately 1300 students, the school is dividided into three academic houses of about 400 students each. Each house contains approximately 100 students in each grade. Each house has a house principal (who has a 20 percent teaching assignment and 80 percent administrative assignment) and a counselor. Students are in self-contained classes in grade 5, two-teacher teams in grade 6, and four-person teams in grades 7 and 8. All houses are serviced by a special area section of the school and a physical education area of the school. Students are grouped with students from their own house even when in these other sections of the building. Physically, houses are separated by hallways and are color coded to identify the different houses. Great care is taken to have similar student bodies and similar teaching staffs in each house. Students generally stay in the same house for four years. Students, through this house plan, are able to develop a closer identity with an administrator, counselor, and group of teachers than they would if the school operated as a single unit. It is a model of a house plan that has survived the test of time. It is also an example of a school that was built for a house plan.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 19 years

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DISTRICT: Hicksville School District #17
SCHOOL: Hicksville Middle School
ADDRESS: Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801
TELEPHONE: (516) 933-6521
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 679
CONTACT: Joseph Giambalvo, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The previous junior high was organized by department areas within the building. Upon converting to a middle school, six separate team areas in the building were selected. Each team area contains the four team classrooms (English, social studies, math, science) and a team room. A pilot team containing a foreign language teacher has all five classrooms adjacent to each other. The "team room" is used by the team teachers for team teacher meetings, material and lesson preparation, and parent conferences.

Students are assigned lockers in their team area. This practice has led to student pride in their team area as evidenced by cleaner halls, undamaged posters, and birthday greetings on lockers (balloons, cards, ribbons, etc.). Bulletin boards and display cabinets within team areas are used to display team work. Students mix with students from other teams for all other classes.

Students and parents have previously expressed concern regarding the move from a small, cozy elementary school situation to a large secondary school. By grouping the team classrooms and lockers together, students are able to maintain this secure feeling. By necessity and design, their travel to other areas of the building for physical education, music, lunch, etc., helps prepare them for the feeling of being a part of the larger

school community and eventually to be a part of a larger high school.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Frank Erwin, Guidance Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: b

The Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School was designed around the "house" concept in the mid-1960s. At that time, the three houses each contained grades 6, 7, and 8. With declining enrollment one house was phased out within a three-year period. In 1981, all fifth-graders were assigned to the middle school.

Currently the 5th grade homeroom and academic classes are contained in House I. At the end of 5th grade, they are assigned to either House II or House III for their remaining three years at the middle school.

A guidance counselor is assigned to Houses II and III (grades 6, 7, and 8). That counselor has the student for at least those three years. In addition, each counselor is assigned to a portion of the 5th grade.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 22 years

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DISTRICT: Lancaster Central School District
SCHOOL: Aurora Middle School
ADDRESS: 148 Aurora Street
Lancaster, NY 14086
TELEPHONE: (716) 686-3220
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 855
CONTACT: Terrence J. Smerka, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

During the past six months, the Lancaster Central School District had a major reorganization of our school system, changing the middle school from a grade 7, 8 middle school into a 6th, 7th, and 8th middle school. In addition, our elementary schools became K-5 schools. Team teaching was added throughout the building for all teachers of mathematics, science, English, and social studies in grades 6, 7, and 8 with a common planning time. In addition, "houses" were established within the school where they were located on each floor of the building. There are a red, a white, and a blue house with the color differentiating one from another with no particular designation other than having a patriotic theme. Each house is made up of a 6th grade team, a 7th grade team, and an 8th grade team. There are 12 team teachers combining all three grades in each house, one house to a floor.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis Tosetto, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The Lewiston-Porter Middle School had wings added during past years when enrollment was climbing. This configuration proved to be an advantage when the program was transformed from a junior high school to a middle school format. A separate wing was designated for each grade level for academic instruction. Each academic wing houses two instructional teams (English, science, social studies, and math). Academic teachers from each team are located next to one another by subject areas to allow for a sharing of ideas and materials. There are no storerooms for textbooks or instructional materials. Students from one grade level are not allowed into other grade-level wings without a pass. Teachers in each wing know the names of students who pass their classrooms each day. The central core of the school and an additional wing house exploratory subject classrooms, a Learning Skills Center, and the cafeteria. Students' lunch periods are by grade level, and students select lunch table companions during the first three days of school. The cafeteria seating is divided into four color-coded sections that are supervised by teacher aides who are responsible for the students seated in their section. Students may move within their selected section during the school year.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Oswego City School District
SCHOOL: Oswego Middle School
ADDRESS: Mark Fitzgibbons Drive
Oswego, NY 13126
TELEPHONE: (315) 341-5856
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 787
CONTACT: Edward W. Matott, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The Oswego Middle School has an enrollment of 787 students for school year 1989-90. Students are assigned to teaching teams. There are seven academic, or CORE, teams. These teams consist of a mathematics, science, English, and social studies teacher. There are approximately 115 students per teaching team. Most teams are housed in an academic corridor, or wing, of the facility.

The related arts program consists of 13 week cycles of vocal music, art, and home and career skills required at both grade levels. In addition, two levels of Spanish or French are offered as full-year courses to 8th graders. Seventh-graders are required to have 13 weeks of study skills, Health I, and Health II on a rotating basis. Both 7th and 8th grade students are required to have one-half year of physical education and one-half year of technology. Technology is offered in four separate topics in each of the two years.

Remediation programs exist in reading and mathematics. There is a full learning disabled program with students totally mainstreamed. In addition, there is a mainstreamed Option I program. Except for the 50 eighth-graders involved in the academic advanced program, all other students are heterogeneously grouped.

Chorus, band, and orchestra are offered during our school's activity period. Students who do not participate are supervised in a study period. A student's day consists of eight 42-minute periods and a 30-minute lunch period.

Academic teams serve as home base for our students. Many social functions by teams are an outgrowth of our organizational approach. Team picnics, field trips, fund raisers, and competitions have evolved as a result of the team as a family concept.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 14 years

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DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 485
CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The building was designed according to the "House Concept" with three academic houses, a central services house, a developmental house, and a physical education wing. Main office, counseling services, library-media center, audio-visual office, and nurse's office are all housed in the central core. Home and career skills, technology, art, and music classrooms are located in the developmental house, thus promoting teaming among the developmental teachers. The three academic wings allow for grade-level organizations, of 6th, 7th, and 8th mixed houses, or a combination or variation of the two. In all instances, the anchoring of academic teams and developmental teams in specific locations greatly enhances student support, instructional integration, and a sense of identity.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Scarsdale Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Scarsdale Junior High School
ADDRESS: Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
TELEPHONE: (914) 472-3478
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 840
CONTACT: Peter Telfer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

Scarsdale Junior High School had three academic houses for 21 years, but they were never used effectively until 1978-79. There are five small elementary schools that feed into the junior high. Each spring the junior high staff works closely with the elementary schools in order to place each entering sixth-grader in one of three houses. Each house offers the same program, and the student groups are balanced based on ability levels, sex, and social considerations. There are three sixth-grade teams, and each one is made up of an English, social studies, science, and mathematics teacher. A group of 90-100 sixth-graders, representing all five elementary schools, spends two-thirds of their day with their team of students and teachers. When they are scheduled for special subject areas, they are mixed with students from their grade level from the other two houses.

Each of the three houses has a 6th, 7th and 8th grade team. There are approximately 275 students in each house, plus an alternative program for about 50 students in grades 7 and 8. A house counselor is in charge of each house and conducts the

team meetings. A teacher is part of a grade-level team, a house, and a department.

The establishment of smaller groups of students in houses eases the transition from a small elementary school to a middle school at least twice the size. By spending two-thirds of the day within the house, a student is comfortable and well known. By mixing them with other students from the other two houses in special subject areas, they expand their relationships and identify with the total school. This eases the transition when they go to an even larger high school in grades 9-12.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: 315-685-8361
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are assigned to academic teams. Teachers do not cross-team but, in fact, teach the students assigned as a common group.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Troy City School District
SCHOOL: W. K. Doyle Middle School
ADDRESS: 1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
TELEPHONE: (518) 271-5352
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 782
CONTACT: James M. Gorman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: b

The organizational structure of a school depends upon a number of variables—the building, the staff, student population, etc. An organization plan can be anything from the self-contained classroom to the open school concept. The W. K. Doyle Middle School decided that the following schools-within-a-school team approach to instruction would best meet the needs of students and staff.

The plan consists of six teams; two teams in each of three houses. There are three teams at grade 7 and three teams at grade 8; each team consists of 120 students. A five-teacher team enables the students to have five different teachers for five different subjects (mathematics, science, langauge arts, social studies, and foreign language). In the subject areas of mathematics, science, and language arts, there will be opportunities for students to be involved at a Skills, Regular, or Honors level depending upon each child's individual ability. Students will go out of team for home and career skills, technology, art, music, physical education, and health.

Teams for the most part, especially at grade 7, have a large block of time to deliver the curriculum. This allows for flexibility in scheduling instruction time and variety in the child's program. There are six team leaders who receive a salary supplement to organize, direct, and interact with the administration in an effort to improve communication and provide a more effective program for the students. Leadership is needed at the individual team level to ensure that decisions involving regrouping of students, correlating information, selecting skills, scheduling parent conferences, and using modular scheduling are made properly and that the unique personalities of the teams emerge. One period per day is set aside for team planning time where the team leader chairs the meeting; this allows for greater teacher interaction.

This change in organization structure provides an improved learning environment for our students. It takes the bigness out of the school and replaces it with six smaller school units within the same wall structure, giving students a home base, identity and personal attention, a feeling of family. Teacher teams share responsibility for the education and personal development of a common group of students and flexible time assignments within blocks of time encourage interdisciplinary programs and creative time usage.

Interdisciplinary team teaching is defined as a grouping of five teachers who present five subjects to five sections of students. The number of students involved is approximately 120. The teams consist of mathematics, social studies, science, language arts, and foreign language.

Advantages of interdisciplinary teams include:

- Students have subject matter specialists for each subject area, but there is coordination of the total program.
- Special interdisciplinary units and activities can be provided by a team to meet the needs of students above and beyond the curriculum guides.
- Teachers can better focus on the needs of the students through a team effort.
- Content, as well as skills, is readily correlated.
- A skills program is best implemented when it is integrated through all disciplines.
- A personal development program is best implemented

when it is integrated throughout all subject areas and teachers.

- Planning periods can be used for student and parent conferences as well as for coordinating the instructional program.
- A discipline code for the entire team can be established, communicated and implemented cooperatively.
- The use of classroom clusters reduces problems in the hallways; students may change classes at times decided by teams.
- Blocks of time and flexible scheduling can be the key parts of the program.
- Sections can be organized homogeneously or heterogeneously; regrouping is possible.

The team is the most important unit in the middle school organizational plan. Being a member of a team involves more than cognitive understanding of middle school literature; it needs to be an effective experience demonstrating that adults can work together to best meet the developmental needs of early adolescents.

The team process is successful when:

- The needs of students are met.
- Block-of-time scheduling is utilized.
- There is flexibility in daily, weekly, and monthly schedules.
- Team members are willing to share thoughts, ideas, and responsibilities.
- The administration and school district support the team efforts.
- Organized knowledge and skill development are correlated.
- There is adequate time for team planning, and that time is used productively.
- Resource people are available to the team.
- The team leader successfully involves all members of the team in team activities.
- Pupils are in various grouping arrangements during the course of the day.
- Team members practice good human relations skills.
- Teams take the time to evaluate their effectiveness.
- Students feel good about themselves.
- Teachers believe in the middle school concept.
- Parents are involved in the school program.

Area c

Developing Advisor-Advisee, Home-Based Guidance, or Student Mentor Programs

One of the purposes of middle-level education is to support the personal/social development of students. Successful advisor-advisee, home-based guidance, and student mentor programs are primary vehicles for this support. Examples and models of such programs are contained in this section.

Area c: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- Community School District #3
  The Center School
- Community School District #27
  Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
- Hartford Central School District
  Hartford Central School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Kenmore Union Free School District
  Herbert Hoover Middle School
- Kings Park Central School District
  William T. Rogers Middle School
- Middle Country Central School District
  Dawnwood Middle School
  Selden Middle School
- Nanuet Union Free School District
  A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
- Newark Valley Central School District
  Newark Valley Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- Oneonta City School District
  Oneonta Junior High School
- Sherman Central School District
  Sherman Central School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- Smithtown Central School District
  Accompsett Intermediate School
- Ticonderoga Central School District
  Ticonderoga Middle School
- Trumansburg Central School District
  Trumansburg Middle School
- Wantagh Union Free School District
  Wantagh Middle School
- Weedsport Central School District
  Weedsport Junior-Senior High School

DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Bronxville Middle School has an extensive advisor-advisee program. The teacher/student ratio is 1:12. Staff have worked on this program for over three years, and it has clearly had a positive impact on the school climate.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: The Center School
ADDRESS: 270 West 70th Street
New York, NY 10023
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2929
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 165
CONTACT: Elaine Schwartz, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The advisor-advisee program divides the 165 children into advisory groups ranging from 9-12 children with an adult advocate. All adults connected with the children are advisors. This includes school aides as well as the director of the school.

The advisory meets formally on a once-a-week basis and, in addition, the advisor meets informally with an advisee whenever necessary or possible. The advisor is an academic and psychological support for the student throughout the year. He or she is the parent contact as well as the contact other teachers use to find out or give information about the child. The child writes in a daily journal, and it is a response journal so that the advisor replies on a once-a-week basis. The writing is another way that the advisor touches base with the child.

Children are given written reports on their progress except in the first trimester when the child is asked to evaluate his or her own progress. The advisor meets with the parent or guardian and child to discuss each report.

The children enter the school at 5th grade level and leave after four years. They have a different advisor each year. In this way, the child gets to know four different adults in a unique way, and the change prevents a "mother-child" or "father-child" relationship from forming and interfering with the goals of the advisor.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Columbus Academy's advisor-advisee program has changed over the last several years. The first year (1986-87), when there were 60 sixth-graders, the three teachers and teacher-director divided the students into four advisory groups. They met with the students one period a week and were available for individual conferences. The following year, 1987-88, with 120 sixth- and seventh-graders, the six staff members met with a single-grade advisory group. In 1988-89, at full enrollment, 10 staff members met a multigraded advisory group (their homeroom group). The once-a-week period was now augmented by the homeroom time, which was 20 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the afternoon. In response to the 6th grade students who felt neglected and lost among the older students, staff again changed the advisory system to have separate advisories for the 6th grade students and combined 7th-8th grade advisories. In addition, the eighth-graders have a once-a-week guidance period to satisfy their expressed need for separateness.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
ADDRESS: 320 Beach 104 Street
Rockaway Beach, NY 11694
TELEPHONE: (718) 945-2700
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,000
CONTACT: Ilana Block, Scholar Research Institute

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Built into the *Scholar Research Institute* program at JHS 180Q is a one-period-per-week Advisory Program. Students are divided, without regard to their classes, into small groups of

between 10 and 14 that reflect the various ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds of the school population as a whole. Each group is moderated by one of the many *Scholar Research Institute* teachers on staff. The purposes of the advisory period are as follows: to foster an awareness and appreciation of each other's heritage; to give students the opportunity to share feelings and concerns with their peers and adults in a nonthreatening environment; to form a lasting and significant relationship with an adult role model in the school; to encourage student demonstrations of fellowship and leadership. The school guidance team is available at all times to offer guest discussions in values clarification and to advise teacher moderators in the handling of particular problems.

The *Scholar Research Institute* advisory period is an integral component of the educational program. The innovators of the program agreed that, in order to meet the needs of preadolescents and adolescents, attention had to be paid to *more* than worthwhile academic curricula.

By viewing our students as total human beings rather than "achievers" in one area or another, staff have insured their growth and facilitated a smooth transition from one stage to another. The positive outcomes of the advisory period are also reflected in attitudinal changes in the teaching staff; they seem to be more connected to their students, more personally involved with their success. Most teachers indicate that *all* children in the middle school should have access to the advisory period.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Hartford Central School District
SCHOOL: Hartford Central School
ADDRESS: Hartford, NY 12838
TELEPHONE: (518) 632-5923
GRADE SPAN: Pre K-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 540
CONTACT: Frank J. Barone, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The teacher-advisor (TA) program is an effort to provide middle school students with more effective (and affective) guidance than is currently afforded (one "guidance counselor" for over 500 students, K-12). The program allows each student the opportunity to develop a close working relationship with one teacher through regular meetings in small groups. It also affords parents a contact person in the school who is working closely with their child.

Ideally, the teacher-advisor group is made up of one teacher and 7-8 students. The groups are either from one grade only or mixed from 6th to 8th grades. The size of the group is vital to the functioning of the program. The "teacher" can be any adult in the school who has contact with the students. Teachers are the most obvious choice. Aides, secretaries, the nurse, or other adults in the building are also encouraged to participate. In this way, the size of the groups can more easily be maintained.

The best time for TA groups to meet is first thing in the morning. TA groups need between 15 and 20 minutes each day to spend together as a group. During this time, a number of things need to occur. At the very least, the time needs to include a brief check for preparedness for the day ahead. Does everyone have their books, their homework, their gym clothes, their lunch tickets, etc.? How are things going? What's coming up in the near future...the distant future? It is a time for students to get ready for the many different things they are being asked to do.

In addition to the daily check-up function, the TA program also allows the group an opportunity to do a wide variety of things that give the group a chance to interact in ways that may be very different from what can happen in a classroom setting with many more students. The TA group has a chance to really get to know each other and learn something about themselves and how they get along with others.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Blue Mountain Middle School student body is assigned to academic teams. Each 6th, 7th, and 8th grade team is composed of three, four, and four homerooms, respectively. Every morning, the students in each homeroom meet with their team teacher. Schedules, announcements, student government business, and other items pertinent to the students in each room are discussed. In addition, each academic team utilizes a seven-step process in working with its students. The steps include:

- Student/teacher interaction during homeroom, after class, at lunch, or during the teacher's preparation time
- A student meeting with a team teacher where the rapport is good

- The student meeting with the team of teachers during the team planning time
- The student conferencing with the guidance counselor, school nurse, psychologist, or social worker
- A meeting among the student, teacher(s), and parent
- A conference between the teacher/team and the administration to discuss and/or determine strategies to assist the student
- A meeting between the administration and the student based upon teacher input.

The organizational structure described has facilitated individual and group advisory possibilities. In addition, it helps students to develop an identity with a home group and the large unit of the team. It also enables students to be known by another individual other than the counselor and provides flexibility in working with another adult should the student feel comfortable with the homeroom teacher. Finally, since all interactions within the school are based on the seven-step approach, the consistency needed by the early adolescent is grounded in this advisory approach. Because this is an alternative to the advisor/advisee concept, it is designed to meet individual and group needs.

Since this approach is known to all staff, it also enables the other teams to interact with the academic teams of teachers, offering input and insights into the student's behavior. Other staff, cognizant of the approach, can tap into the relationships that are developed by the homeroom teacher or the team of teachers.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Kenmore Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Herbert Hoover Middle School
ADDRESS: 249 Thorncliff Road
Kenmore, NY 14223
TELEPHONE: (716) 875-5875
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 601
CONTACT: Richard F. Coates, Principal
Irene J. Kent, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Advisor/Advisee Program

Referred to as "Prime Time" with students, the purpose of this program is to establish a direct personal relationship for the student with one particular teacher to whom the student is able to turn for advice or aid in any area (academic or personal) or any other form of help important to that student. Although this period is brief and occurs at the start of the day, it allows time for students to interact briefly with the teacher and participate in mini-activities geared toward the development of self-esteem and positive attitudes toward school. The Prime Time Program provides each student with a personal advocate with whom he or she is invited to form a trusting relationship.

The "Home Base" Program

Recognizing the need for middle-level students to engage in active participation, to broaden their experiential base, and to develop life skills, the "Home Base" program was established in order that students would have time to pursue nonacademic interests. Five times per year, students are given an opportunity to select an activity from a given number of offerings that utilize teacher talents and interests. Students attend this "Home Base" period four days per week, with each activity lasting about seven weeks. Placed in the middle of the day, it provides a "break" for students from the regular routine and allows for a period of relaxed, enjoyable yet purposeful, supervised activity and instruction.

The "A.C.T." Program (Acquired Clear Thinking)

The "A.C.T." program has evolved over a period of more than five years from isolated use of thinking exercises into a planned and organized three-year sequential, developmental, and articulated program designed to introduce students to a variety of skills in the areas of critical, creative, and affective thinking. Every student has a Prime Time teacher who also serves as his or her A.C.T. teacher. Students are scheduled for one period of A.C.T. per week. The A.C.T. program is not to be viewed as a "stand alone" course in thinking skills. The main purpose is to expose students to selected basic skills and processes that research has found to be important to the development of effective, intelligent thinking and behavior. "A.C.T." is intended to emphasize the attitudes and dispositions necessary for becoming inclined toward thinking. Because these are seen as actually of greater importance than the skills themselves, the emphasis is *not* on skill mastery to the point of perfection. Rather, it is hoped that students will develop an integrated "Thinking Spirit" that will become intrinsic to the student's character.

Each program emphasizes:

- A holistic approach to middle level education
- Development of student self-esteem and self-identity
- A balance between academic tasks and personal/social growth activities
- Opportunities for self-exploration, self-definition and self-development in the cognitive, affective, and physical domains
- Recognition and validation of the individual
- Providing a "safe haven" for students where support, respect and concern within a caring atmosphere have been established

- Preventing students from becoming anonymous or lost in the large group
- Developing a sense of responsibility and accountability for personal behavior and learning.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE: 3-5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Kings Park Central School District
SCHOOL: William T. Rogers Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Dock Road
Kings Park, NY 11754
TELEPHONE: (516) 269-3270
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 970
CONTACT: George Duffy, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Advisory Program at the William T. Rogers Middle School meets for 20 minutes at the beginning of each day. Monday and Wednesday are scheduled for Silent Reading and study time/extra help. Tuesday and Thursday are script days and Friday is devoted to student activities.

Structured monthly themes dealing with school orientation, academic skills, socialization, personal values, family, physical health, citizenship/law, and community/environment are the major topics of concern covered in the scripts. Although the scripts deal with the same theme, there are different age-appropriate activities for each grade level.

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DISTRICT: Middle Country Central School District

SCHOOL:	Dawnwood Middle School	Selden Middle School
ADDRESS:	10 43rd Street Centereach, NY 11720	22 Jefferson Avenue Centereach, NY 11720
TELEPHONE:	(516)468-5550	(516) 468-5760

GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1242 (Selden)
975 (Dawnwood)
CONTACT: Elizabeth McCaruille, Principal (Selden)
John Reid, Principal (Dawnwood)

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

PATS (Programmed Advisory for Teachers and Students) in the Middle Country Central School District was inititated in the 1987-88 school year to provide each middle school student with an additional adult at school who can provide the support that is so critical to healthy child development in the adolescent years. It is one way of sharing and caring and involving significant adults in a young person's life.

The teacher-advisor, in addition to the student's guidance counselor, is another person at school whom parents may call on for assistance and advice pertaining to any school-related matter. This communication is encouraged as a way to help facilitate and promote each student's individual success.

When students reach middle school age, they want to be involved in decisions that affect them. The advisory concept allows students to work closely with the teaching staff, who will help students develop a repertoire of these decision-making skills. The skills are then applied to cooperative planning of educational goals, personal and social growth, and career awareness experiences. All of the units are developmental, and the themes carry over from one grade level to the next.

Students meet with their advisor on an alternating day schedule, for a 40-minute period, as part of an advisory group. Team, grade-level, and house activities occur periodically throughout the year. Additional programs are provided through the Youth-at-Risk funding.

A multitude of material and resources is provided for each advisor, for each grade level. The school counselors assist the teacher-advisor throughout the school year to help select and assess the materials and to implement and evaluate each part of the program. Time is built into team planning periods to discuss concerns and implementation, and a variety of inservice programs are offered as an *option* for additional training.

The teacher-advisory program in Middle Country has involved extensive research and staff involvement. The program was based upon exemplary models in Virginia, Maryland, Colorado, and Texas and materials provided by other districts nationwide.

Initially developed for grades 6 and 7, the program is currently extended to eighth-graders and involves 80 percent of the middle school staff in each building.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Nanuet Union Free School District
SCHOOL: A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
ADDRESS: 143 Church Street
Nanuet, NY 10954

TELEPHONE: (914) 623-1266
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 475
CONTACT: Peter S. Bydlik, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

At the A. MacArthur Barr Middle School, each student is assigned to a faculty advisor. Advisories consist of 10 or 12 students and one advisor. Advisory meetings are scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 8:18 a.m. each morning all year long.

Advisory began during the summer of 1987 when six teachers worked for three weeks to develop a pilot program. Since then all of the 41 teachers in the school have gone through a two-day training program designed to develop an awareness of the program and the skills necessary to become an advisor. Most recently, four of the teacher aides have also been trained. Every teacher in the school along with the aides participates in advisory. The advisory program serves to meet the developmental needs of students in the 11-to-14 age bracket. Each student in the school knows that he or she has one adult in the school who takes an extra bit of interest in his or her well being. Students are engaged in group activities that include (for example) getting along with peers, getting along with siblings, how to organize their studies or their day, etc. For students having more individual programs, one-on-one advisement sessions are also used. These sessions might be used to discuss how to approach a teacher that the student is having difficulty with or problems relating to poor academic progress. While not designed to be therapy or to take the place of guidance with a counselor, advisory is intended to handle many of the day-to-day problems, leaving the guidance counselor free to handle more difficult situations.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newark Valley Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Valley Middle School
ADDRESS: Whig Street
Newark Valley, NY 13811
TELEPHONE: (607) 642-5524
GRADE SPAN: 4-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 555
CONTACT: Robert Gwinn, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Newark Valley Middle School Student Advisory Program is a curriculum component that provides an opportunity for small groups of 7th grade students to meet daily with an adult advisor. The advisory groups participate in a variety of activities and discussions relating to personal, academic, and social concerns.

The program is designed to provide 7th grade students with an adult advisor who is interested in them as an individual, not just as a student. The advisory program encourages a more personal, humane approach to education, which is important to our seventh-graders.

Our advisory groups meet for 20 minutes daily in groups of 7-9 students. Advisors are volunteers from the faculty - 7th grade teachers, special-area teachers, and teachers from other grade levels. To enable special-area teachers and teachers from other grade levels to participate, a 20-minute schoolwide silent reading period (SSR) is built into the schedule at the same time.

Advisors receive training by the school guidance counselor and psychologist in group facilitation before starting. A handbook of activities from a variety of sources is given to advisors as an optional resource. Advisors meet monthly to discuss problems, plan activities, and share successes.

Advisory groups participate in a variety of activities ranging from worksheets dealing with study skills, decision making, communication, or self-esteem to low-key competitive athletic or academic contests. Groups can take walks, use the playground, do service projects, do arts and crafts activities, have discussions, or do any other group activity. Groups also participate in a few days of silent reading with the rest of the school, as well as learn new skills like using CD-ROM technology in the media center.

Through activities and discussions, we aim to develop teacher-student, student-student relations and help widen the students' personal and social interests. Activities are provided to help each student recognize his or her potential and worth and recognize the same qualities in others.

Seventh-graders surveyed after their advisory experience comment favorably on the informality of advisory time and the type of activities, especially discussions dealing with their problems. Several students also felt the experience helped them get to know people better and recognize qualities in classmates and teachers of which they were previously unaware.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867

TELEPHONE: 607-564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 98
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

As a 7-12 building Newfield Central School has teams of teachers at each grade level. Each team identifies at-risk youngsters, and members of each team volunteers to act as a mentor for one youngster so identified. This is not supported financially and has not usually involved home visits. Rather, the team develops a plan for each youngster and the mentor takes the responsibility for overseeing the plan. The mentor works with the guidance counselor, school psychologist, administration, and with area agencies, if need be, to implement the plan. The mentor has the student in class and/or homeroom.

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School
ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3251
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1001
CONTACT: Donald C. Martin, Guidance Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The purpose of the Robert Moses Middle School Guidance Program is to ease the transition from childhood to adolescence, and from elementary school to high school.

Each child is important and each child has the right to a supportive environment for his or her physical and social growth. Each child is a unique and different individual with specific needs. Therefore, the Robert Moses Middle School endeavors to help each child develop according to his or her own capabilities. The goals of the programs are:

- To help students understand themselves
- To prevent future problems by early intervention
- To help students gain self-awareness/self-esteem
- To assist students to become aware of career opportunities
- To help students in decision-making process
- For counselors to work in harmony with other school professionals.

Current practices include:

- *Use of individual counseling* - one-on-one sessions to develop trust, respect, and caring, so that feelings and concerns can be aired in a nonthreatening environment. Counselor seeks to help students develop and solve problems, concerns, etc.
- *Use of small groups* - develop topics of mutual concern to students, e.g. children of divorce, children whose siblings or parents have died, and self-esteem.
- *Working with parents of students* - work as a liaison between parents, student and teacher, helping parents to better understand the academic potentials of their children, helping parents interpret and understand standardized testing, and working as a resource person.

Referral source - making referrals when necessary to:

- School nurse
- Social worker
- Psychologist
- Remedial teachers

An additional full-time guidance counselor was provided solely for 6th grade students.

The program also has another unique and very important aspect. The sixth-graders arrive at the middle school from several different elementary schools and consequently one immediate goal is to forge a new unified class identity. To this end, all 6th grade classrooms are in one wing of the school, and classes are made up of studetns from several elementary schools. In addition, there is only one guidance counselor for the entire 6th grade, which provides another element of commonality for the students and enables the counselor to devote his attention and energies solely to them. Small-group discussions frequently focus on the changes that are occurring in their lives, their feelings about those changes, ways of coping and adapting, and the responsibilities that come along with increased opportunities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Oneonta City School District
SCHOOL: Oneonta Junior High School
ADDRESS: Upper East Street
Oneonta, NY 13820
TELEPHONE: (607) 433-8266
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 306
CONTACT: Diane Munro, School Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Oneonta Junior High School teachers have developed an advisor/advisee program within the traditional homeroom program. Students are assigned a homeroom in grade 7, and they remain with that homeroom teacher through grade 8 and their entry into

high school. The homeroom program has several features that truly make it a home away from home for junior high children.

Students are greeted each morning during the homeroom attendance period. Most homerooms contain fewer than 15 students, allowing teachers the time to interact on a personal level. Teachers can discuss students' interests such as progress of a sports team, hobbies, or other concerns.

Students return to homeroom for a one-half hour activity period immediately before or after lunch. Faculty members volunteer their enthusiasm and expertise in offering special interest activities including: Math Club, Yearbook, Stock Market Game, Radio Club, Songwriting, Student Council, Intramural Sports, Craft Club, School Paper, Yorkers, Needlepoint, Chess Club, Library Club, Tutoring Club.

The activities are distributed evenly Monday through Thursday. Fridays are reserved for homeroom activities and special programs.

Today's early adolescents present a special challenge to teachers in the area of personal development. These needs are addressed during specified Friday homeroom periods. Packets of activities have been developed so that teachers can present and discuss teen issues and solutions in a supportive and safe environment. Self-awareness and decision-making skills are enhanced through the program. A list of activities appears below, and sample activities can be provided upon request. Special care is given to prepare teachers so that they feel adequate to discuss the topics presented.

Activities for Seventh-Graders	*Activities for Eighth-Graders*
What Is a Guidance Counselor?	Me and My Counselor
My All Time Favorites	Want Ads
Name Tag	The Fallout Shelter Program
Values Voting	Whom Am I? Have I Changed?
Games for Kids to Play	Demands That I Make
Alligator River	Public Interview
Career and Job Preference	What Do I Value in Myself and a Job?
Who Am I?	Rank Order
Either/Or: Forced Choice	Privacy Circles
Different Kinds of Work	Can Men and Women Do The Same Job?
Oral Vocabulary	Group Interview
My Interests and Abilities	Unfinished Sentences
Investigate the Future	Investigate the Future

A newly developed "Incentive Program" has been designed to increase pro-social behavior and reward the often overlooked "steady" student. Students will be awarded merits based on a wide range of positive behaviors in academic, social, and citizenship areas. Students are also awarded demerits when unacceptable behaviors persist after reasonable corrective attempts have been made.

The homeroom "advisor" provides the reinforcement and support critical to the success of such a program. All of the merits and demerits end up with the homeroom teacher for inclusion on the student's folder. This provides the opportunity for an adult friend to either congratulate the student or discuss possible strategies for change when demerits have been awarded.

Additional information on the merit system is included in the Homeroom Advisory Program Teacher's Manual.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Sherman Central School District
SCHOOL: Sherman Central School
ADDRESS: Box 950
Park Street
Sherman, NY 14781
TELEPHONE: (716) 761-6121
GRADE SPAN: 7 **ENROLLMENT:** 44
CONTACT: James Roraback, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: c

The Sherman Central School initiated a student mentor program in seventh grade for the 1989-90 school year. The schedule is made up of an eight period day with what is called an "activity period" in the middle of the day. This period is split into two 30-minute periods and runs from 12:03 to 1:06 p.m.

From 12:03 p.m. to 12:33 p.m., the high school students eat their lunch and the junior high students are assigned to Study Hall. Then at 12:33 p.m., junior high students go to lunch and high school students go to a Study Hall. In the past, this time was used by junior high faculty to pull students from these study halls for extra help or to help them prepare or work on special projects. Now, the seventh grade students are assigned in groups of six to eight students, three days per week, to a junior high faculty member. This faculty member acts as their mentor and counselor.The staff members helps these students resolve adjustment problems, develop organizational skills and study skills, develop self-esteem, deal with peer pressure and assume responsibility for their actions.Every five weeks throughout the school year, these students are reassigned to a different staff member in hopes of establishing relationships with the entire junior-high faculty.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Skaneateles Middle School, through a grade 7 and 8 Homebase Program, provides an opportunity to develop positive student/school relationships outside the academic domain and work in the affective domain, which can often be neglected in a high-pressure academic society. Through the Homebase Program, each student has an opportunity to interact with a smaller unit of peers to help promote positive peer interaction and a sense of school community.

Each Homebase group of 8-13 students has a middle school staff member as its "advisor." Each advisor has been trained in group process skills and will not only facilitate positive group discussion but also be available as a positive adult contact for his or her Homebase group members.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Smithtown Central School District
SCHOOL: Accompsett Intermediate School
ADDRESS: 660 Meadow Road
Smithtown, NY 11787
TELEPHONE: (516) 366-4711
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 623
CONTACT: Dr. Audrey Savwoir, Guidance Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREAS: c

The seeds of the Accompsett Intermediate School Advisor/Advisee Program were planted over a year ago and carefully nurtured during the 1988-89 school year.

In the 1987-88 school year, the principal established a standing building committee to focus on middle level education. The decision to develop an Advisor/Advisee Program grew out of the shared decision-making which took place between the principal and committee members. This committee included a guidance counselor and teachers representing a cross section of disciplines. Once the decision to develop an Advisor/Advisee Program for the incoming sixth grade was made, the principal requested interested staff members to volunteer. Sixteen teachers and the assistant principal volunteered to become a part of the program. As a group, they were enthusiastic and conscientious in their efforts to help to develop an Advisory/Advisee Program. The program evolved from three preparatory workshops and sub-committee meetings during the school year. Sub-committee chairmen worked with members in three groups to develop the philosophy, goals and objectives, and operating guidelines for the program. They also selected curriculum materials from materials provided, which facilitated in large measure, the work to be done in the final workshop. The final workshop was an intense, five day workshop devoted to building communication skills and finalizing the Advisor/Advisee Program curriculum. Workshop participants were involved in cooperative learning exercises to promote cooperation among themselves, and to further develop awareness of the great potential for learning that cooperation provides. Knowledge attained could be applied in the work to be accomplished within the advisory group.Simulated cases of students were presented to workshop participants, to sensitize them to the types of cases they may encounter, and provide practice in routing information to appropriate school officials and/or special service personnel.

The district intermediate school guidance chairperson planned, organized, and served as workshop leader in the three Advisor/Advisee workshops. The Advisor/Advisee Program which was developed addresses three concerns: orientation, self-esteem, and study skills. These concerns were chosen by the group because they are interdependently linked to successful schooling. The orientation component was seen as being vital in promoting effective adjustment to school. The subsequent focus on study skills and improve self-esteem each contributed to the overall well-being of the student. The materials selected for the Advisor/Advisee Program are geared to these concerns and represent the vehicle being used to implement the program. Sixth grade students, in groups of 12, are currently meeting with their advisor on Wednesday and Thursday of each week for a 20 minute period in a homeroom setting. During this 20 minute period, advisors follow the program outlined in the Advisory Handbook.

A communication network has been set up within the school to ensure continuous communication between advisors and special service personnel: guidance counselors, the school social worker, and school psychologist. This network is designed to facilitate implementation of the program and to provide support and suggestions to advisors in the program. The goals of the Advisor/Advisee Program are in the process of being evaluated. Program evaluation is designed to assess attainment of the goals by utilizing multiple indicators of self-esteem and school climate.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Ticonderoga Central School District
SCHOOL: Ticonderoga Middle School
ADDRESS: Alexandria Avenue
Ticonderoga, NY 12883
TELEPHONE: (518) 585-7442
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 243
CONTACT: Harold P. Bresett, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Ticonderoga Middle School Teachers Mentoring Students Program, or Project Rescue as it was originally called, is a program which provides opportunities for success to students who have been identified as at-risk. Twenty-seven 6th through 8th grade students have been identified and are being mentored by nine volunteer teachers.

Mentoring does not just take the form of one-to-one academic tutoring with students, although that is an integral part of our program. Mentoring also consists of the establishment of a rapport between students, teachers, community members and local resource people on an "outside of school basis." All concerned parties make a concentrated effort to present real life situations and problems these students will need skills to solve during their lifetime. All participants have volunteered time when school is not in session to make a connection between the students being mentored and the environment in which they live.

Students identified through a needs assessment for this program have shown an increase in motivation for learning and have begun to take responsibility for their learning. The school has instituted an Improvement Roll, for students showing academic improvement and the overwhelming majority of students appearing on that roll are students being mentored in this program

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Trumansburg Central School District
SCHOOL: Trumansburg Middle School
ADDRESS: 100 Whig Street
Trumansburg, NY 14886
TELEPHONE: (607) 387-7551
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 346
CONTACT: Charles Wiltse, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

One of the most important goals of the Trumansburg Middle School is that each student will know an adult in a nonthreatening manner. Within our Middle School, each staff member (teachers and aides) has a homeroom of 12 youngsters. This will become their mentoring group. A total of 72 structured minutes is devoted to mentoring each week.

Each Monday, Mentoring Period meets for 40 minutes, during which time the "Project Me" curriculum is taught. This consists of 36 objectives dealing with the following areas:

- *Skillbuilding* - This unit is designed to build group cohesion and trust, facilitate open and helpful communication, and teach a structured and easily remembered problem-solving approach.
- *Peer Issues* - This unit is designed to help students appreciate the positive contribution friends make at this age as well as the detrimental effects of peer pressure.
- *School and Career Issues* - This unit is designed to help students explore their attitudes about school and career opportunities in the future.
- *Family Issues* - This unit is designed to help students become aware of their changing role in the family, to explore the various pressures that affect families today, and to learn how to deal more effectively with these pressures.

On Tuesday through Friday, homeroom is eight minutes long. This is time for staff to check in with their students pertaining to academic programs and social issues.

Once a month, all "Mentors" from each grade level meet. Mentors plan class activities, discuss strategies, and review goals of the program. This has led to an ongoing revision at each grade level for the past four years.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Wantagh Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Wantagh Middle School
ADDRESS: Beltagh Avenue
Wantagh, NY 11793
TELEPHONE: (516) 781-8000 Ext. 350
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 393
CONTACT: Anthony DeNapoli, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: c

At Wantagh Middle School, all students participate in the Advisor-Advisee Program. Teachers and administrators work with small groups of 9-13 students each, and act as the stu-

dent's adult advocate. Advisory groups meet daily during the morning advisory period to take care of daily announcements and attendance and provide an opportunity for students to share concerns and ask questions in a child-centered non-threatening environment.In addition, advisories meet two times per month on an "extended advisory" schedule. During this time advisors and advisees plan different types of experiences not possible on a daily basis. These range from but are not limited to: informal breakfast and birthday celebrations, guided discussions about academic and non-academic issues, use of the sample activities provided in the Advisory Activities Handbook, or just a general informal exchange of ideas. Students receive more than two hours of advisor-advisee contact time per month.

The goal of the advisor-advisee program is to create a positive working relationship that provides the student with both a person and a structure to resolve school concerns. The advisor is a primary resource person for each advisee and is able to keep track of the general academic and social progress being made by each member of the advisory. Advisors receive copies of all academic reports and disciplinary referrals in order to monitor each child's progress and insure early intervention in any "at-risk" situation. This close relationship helps to insure the success of each student and develop a more positive self-image which results in a greater degree of academic and social success for each child.

Advisory is an extension of the school's philosophy of sharing and caring in a family atmosphere. Advisors work closely with parents, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers and other support personnel to encourage maximum growth with guaranteed early intervention when a problem develops. The underlying premise of the advisory program is that no student goes unnoticed during this potentially volatile age. Advisors are encouraged to attend team meetings and share pertinent information with all staff members involved in the learning, growth, and development of each child. This collaborative approach provides a comprehensive profile of each child's unique and special needs and allows staff members to design an individualized plan of action for the success of each student. Students remain with the same advisor during their years in the middle school, thus enabling both the advisory and advisee the opportunity to develop a close, personal relationship. This continuity provides a long-term commitment to each student and strengthens the home-school connection.

The advisory program specifically addresses the following issues:

- the need to help students through the transition from childhood to adolescence
- the need for students to succeed and achieve their full potential
- the need for the entire school community to share ownership and responsibility for the education, support, and guidance required by each student
- the need to emphasize the balance between academic and social growth
- the need to reflect an atmosphere of respect, caring, and support for each child, and especially for those students deemed "at risk"
- the need to promote a feeling of family and reduce the feeling of anonymity among students
- the need to provide an adult advocate for each child in the middle school in addition to classroom teachers and other support personnel.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Weedsport Central School District
SCHOOL: Weedsport Junior-Senior High School
ADDRESS: 2821 E. Brutus Street
P.O. Box 3000
Weedsport, NY 13166
TELEPHONE: (315) 834-6652
GRADE SPAN: 6-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 525
CONTACT: Nelson Bauersfled, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: c

The Weedsport Junior-Senior High School has implemented a program of assigning teachers to students as academic/personal advisors. Those teachers who have volunteered for this meet regularly with students and encourage parents to take a more active role in their students' lives and decision making.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

Area d

Creating Teacher Teams with Common Planning Time

An important component of the middle-level education program described in the Regents Policy Statement is teacher teams sharing responsibility for the education of a common group of students. This section presents several examples and models of teacher teams with common planning time.

Area d: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Amherst Central School District
  Amherst Middle School
- Bridgewater-Leonardsville-West Winfield Central School District Mount Markham Middle School
- Broadalbin-Perth Central School District
  Broadalbin-Perth Middle School
- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Central Islip Public Schools
  Ralph G. Reed Junior High School
- Churchville-Chili Central School District
  Churchville-Chili Middle School
- Community School District #28
  Stephan A. Halsey Junior High School 157
- Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
  Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
- Downsville Central School District
  Downsville Central School
- East Hampton Union Free School District
  East Hampton Middle School
- Elwood Union Free School District
  Elwood Middle School
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Guilderland Central School District
  Farnsworth Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Irvington Union Free School District
  Irvington Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Kings Park Central School District
  William T. Rogers Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Mineola Central School District
  Mineola Middle School
- Nanuet Union Free School District
  A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- Niskayuna Central School District
  Iroquois Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- North Salem Central School District
  North Salem Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Oswego City School District
  Oswego Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Pittsford Central School District
  Pittsford Middle School
- Poland Central School District
  Poland Central School
- Port Byron Central School District
  Port Byron Middle School

- Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
  Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Junior High School
- Rhinebeck Central School District
  Bulkeley Middle School
- Scarsdale Union Free School District
  Scarsdale Junior High School
- Schenectady City School District
  Central Park Middle School
- Sherrill City School District
  Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Middle School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- Troy City School District
  W. K. Doyle Middle School
- Union Springs Central School District
  Union Springs Junior-Senior High School
- Valley Stream Central High School
  Valley Stream North High School
- Weedsport Central School District
  Weedsport Junior-Senior High School

DISTRICT: Amherst Central School District
SCHOOL: Amherst Middle School
ADDRESS: 55 Kings Highway
Amherst, NY 14226
TELEPHONE: (716) 836-3000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Diane Eklund Klein, Assistant Principal
Anton C. Schwarzmueller, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Amherst Middle School is a 6-8 middle school with two-teacher teams operating at both 6th and 7th grade levels. Both levels have common team/grade-level planning time daily.

The 6th grade academic core (common branch subjects) is scheduled for a block of five periods out of eight daily instructional periods. The 7th period is set aside for team planning for both teams. They may and do meet as separate teams or together as two grade-level teams.

Each team consists of four teachers, and approximately 90 students are assigned to each teaching team. During the common planning time, each team deals with all instructional planning for the students in their charge. This includes how the block of time will be utilized for the academic core subjects: grouping and re-grouping of students; organizing special activities, such as outdoor education; and attending to the needs of individual students.

Specific students with learning and/or behavioral problems can be discussed by the team along with the guidance counselor assigned to the 6th grade, and parent conferences can also be scheduled.

At the 7th grade level, there are two interdisciplinary teams of four teachers each: English, social studies, mathematics, and science. While a consecutive block of periods is not available to the 7th grade, the same four periods are set aside for the four academics for both teams. This enables each team to shift the periods assigned to each basic academic subject every 10 weeks. In this way, no single subject is the last academic class of the day for the entire school year.

At the same time, the same period is set aside each day for common planning time for both teaching teams. Hence, the 7th grade teams can operate in much the same manner as the 6th grade teams.

The 6th and 7th grade teachers are very happy with this arrangement and have learned to make good use of it. The only shortcoming is the inability to include all of the "specials" (art, music, physical education, etc.) teachers.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Bridgewater-Leonardsville-West Winfield Central Schools
SCHOOL: Mount Markham Middle School
ADDRESS: Fairground Road
West Winfield, NY 13491
TELEPHONE: (315) 822-6361
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 470
CONTACT: Michael Marcelle, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: d

The Mt. Markham Middle School has created a structure of teacher teams with a common planning time and a common group of students. The teaming approach ranges from mostly self contained at the 5th grade level to total structure is designed to improve communication and smooth the transition from elementary to high school at a very difficult stage for the students. The following is a comprehensive list of practices necessary for a successful team approach:

Communication:

- Conduct conferences with students and/or parents.
- Conduct meetings with special area teachers.
- Discussion and resolution of common student problems.
- Opportunity to meet with student support personnel.
- Discuss strategies for students with special needs.
- Interdisciplinary discussions of subject matter.
- Call and contact parents.
- Discussion of common personal and professional concerns.
- Maintain a daily log of team discussions, as a record and for dissemination to appropriate persons.
- Discussion of current educational research.

Planning/Coordination:

- Analyze student test data.
- Provide input and feedback to building administrators for site based management.
- Preparation for parent-teacher conferences
- Identifying students-at-risk.
- Curriculum coordination/sharing of instructional techniques.
- Plan and organize special events.
- Coordinate student testing schedule.
- Compilation and distribution of student progress reports.

Misc.

- Daily housekeeping chores

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 15 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

DISTRICT: Broadalbin-Perth Central School District
SCHOOL: Broadalbin-Perth Middle School
ADDRESS: RD #4
Amsterdam, NY 12010
TELEPHONE: (518) 842-3919
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 363
CONTACT: Brian Sherman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

In an effort to provide a greater integration of curriculum between core academics (English, mathematics, science, social studies), the middle school schedule has been converted from the traditional five-day, eight-period program to a five-day repeating cycle with flexible class scheduling and a full day of team planning. Four days a week, students attend core academics and enrichment courses taught by members of their instructional team. On the fifth day of the cycle the student team attends Exploratory Day courses such as technology, home and careers, computer technology, art, and music. While these students are attending their exploratory classes, members of the core academics instructional team have an entire day to plan together, integrate their respective curricula, review curriculum programs, make on-site visits to other schools or programs within the district, attend staff development programs, or make location visits to plan for off-campus field trips.

The school administration coordinates the program on a weekly basis.

The proposed and recently implemented program, which provides for a full day of common team planning time, is unique in its structure, as compared to middle education programs elsewhere, and promotes the objectives of the Regents Policy Statement with regard to developing interdisciplinary programs, providing exploratory experiences for middle school students, and the scheduling of flexible time frames within each instructional team, in addition to creating the common planning time.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Bronxville Middle School has an extensive advisor-advisee program. The teacher/student ratio is 1:12. Staff have worked on this program for over three years, and it has clearly had a positive impact on the school climate.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The middle school, which is small, with 234 students in three grades, is organized around grade level teaching teams. Teaching teams have common planning time built into the schedule. They have four teaching contacts and are released from the fifth assignment both to do advisory and to have team meetings.

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DISTRICT: Central Islip Public Schools
SCHOOL: Ralph G. Reed Junior High School
ADDRESS: Half Mile Road
Central Islip, NY 11722
TELEPHONE: (516) 348-5066
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 794
CONTACT: Joseph Orobona, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The Reed School has devised a program where four subject-area teachers (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) have formed a teacher team with common planning time. The four teachers have one group of students in common and the teachers' schedules have been arranged so that their preparation periods fall at the same time. On a weekly basis, the teachers meet together formally to plan goals, objectives, and activities for the common group of students (called the House Plan). An attendance counselor and an assistant principal also meet regularly with the teachers during the preparation period to add input and monitor the program.

As the year progresses and goals and activities become reality, the common preparation time is used to meet with the parents of the students in the House Plan.

Common preparation time has allowed the four teachers to share ideas, explore problem solving and devise activities that are now institutionalized in the House Plan. With each succeeding year, the House Plan has a broader organizational base on which to grow.

Another benefit is the ability to train four teachers in a number of methodologies that have immediate and direct input on their students. It also allows for the coordination of activities with these students and the ability to assign interdepartmental projects.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Churchville-Chili Central School District
SCHOOL: Churchville-Chili Middle School
ADDRESS: 139 Fairbanks Avenue
Churchville, NY 14428
TELEPHONE: (716) 293-1800
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 800
CONTACT: Dr. Joseph W. Hoff, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Part of the development of the middle school has been the implementation of teacher teams. The schedule enables a redefinition of roles and strategies for the five-person teams in grades 7 and 8 (English, mathematics, social studies, science, and foreign language) and three-person teams in grade 6. The continuum of a more self-contained unit in grade 6 within a semi-departmentalized framework...to departmentalized (yet student-centered) teams in grade 7 and 8, has paid off in huge dividends in terms of learning. With instructional teaming in the first year as a middle school, the school has the highest percentage of student attendance, lowest frequency of vandalism, lowest incidence of disciplinary referrals, and highest achievement scores in 15 years. All this despite an increase of 250 more students than the previous year indicates that the move to instructional teams and the concomitant monitoring, belonging, and ownership by staff and students have produced outstanding results.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #28
SCHOOL: Stephen A. Halsey Junior High School 157
ADDRESS: 102nd Street & 64th Avenue
Rego Park, NY 11374
TELEPHONE: (718) 830-4910
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,200
CONTACT: Kathleen Ponze, Teacher, Cluster Grant Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Five 7th grade major subject teachers, responsible for the same 150 7th grade students have three common periods per day. This greatly reduces feelings of teacher isolation and burnout. It affords regular communication about the students. It allows for efficient division of labor for such tasks as creating guidelines, rules, and procedures for homeroom and subject classes as well as parental contact and liaison with guidance, deans, administration, and other sectors in relation to a particular child. This arrangement allows for interdisciplinary planning and thematic teaching.

Grouping teachers into a team greatly reduces the isolation most teachers experience and enables teachers to learn from one another and share their best ideas for their students. Teachers can focus immediately on problems particular students are experiencing. Teachers can meet with parents as a group instead of in disconnected one-to-one meetings.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
ADDRESS: Larkin Place
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
TELEPHONE: (914) 271-2191
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 285
CONTACT: Joseph Zajac, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

An essential component of effective team teaching is common planning time. The Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School currently has three teams of academic teachers. Each team has responsibility for one full grade of students and shares a 45-minute common planning period scheduled every other day. The work that must be covered during these periods is enormous and varied, but it basically falls into three categories: curriculum development, academic concerns about students, and social concerns about students.

Because the school uses an interdisciplinary approach, it is important to use some of the team time to coordinate curriculum and organize special programs. Staff do not attempt to actually develop new units or organize major curriculum changes during this time (summer workshops have provided the best opportunity for that kind of work);they fine-tune the plans and adjust them to meet the needs of current students

during team planning time. Team meetings are used to explore ways to support students as they change and to work on strategies to help ease their transition from elementary school child to high school adolescent. Team time is a chance to discuss individual progress and to seek ways to help students who need support. Through this team exchange, staff are able to pool information, share concerns about students, and determine what to do as a group to meet the needs of each of the students.

Creating common planning time is a relatively easy task within the context of a middle school schedule. In the eight-period day, two periods are set aside for specials classes (music, art, etc.) for each grade level. It is during this time, when all students from a grade level are accounted for elsewhere, that academic teachers on a team have an opportunity to meet together. This schedule has the additional advantage of providing an opportunity within the school day for an entire team of teachers to meet with parents or with other professional staff concerned with the development of the students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

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DISTRICT: Downsville Central School District
SCHOOL: Downsville Central School
ADDRESS: P. O. Box J
Downsville, NY 13755
TELEPHONE: (607) 363-7505
GRADE SPAN: K-12 **ENROLLMENT:** Not reported
CONTACT: Nancy Will, Superintendent

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Downsville Central School has taken grades 4, 5, and 6 and totally changed the structure of the program by "Departmentalizing."

- Students in grades 4, 5, and 6 are housed in one separate portion of the building. The students in those three grades rotate classes within that wing of the building.
- The students are scheduled for grade-level homerooms in the morning and then for an extended period at the end of the day. They move to class in the core subjects - reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies-for blocks of no less than 40 minutes.
- Each teacher of the 4-6 block teaches only one subject but to all three grades. The teachers all have common planning time to work on interdisciplinary instruction. Group conferences are held daily. Common planning is done. The same rules are established by all teachers in the block, and weekly assignment sheets that are monitored and signed by parents are prepared.
- Parent conferences are held frequently with all teachers sitting in.

This program has helped the middle-level students in many ways:

- [illegible]s them to become organized and responsible
- Encourages interdisciplinary work
- Insures each student appropriate instructional time for subjects often ignored at these grade levels such as science and social studies
- Provides consistent expectations for proper behavior in the classroom and hallways
- Exposes them to a greater variety of techniques and experiences (for example, the opportunities in science for a "hands-on," laboratory approach to learning)
- The transition to junior high will be easier because they are being weaned from a totally self-contained classroom setting to total freedom gradually, rather than in one traditional abrupt manner.
- The students feel like a family as evidenced by their comments on evaluation. They always refer to the "students in grades 4-6" rather than to a single classroom or grade. They see themselves as a unit.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: East Hampton Union Free School District
SCHOOL: East Hampton Middle School
ADDRESS: 76 Newtown Lane
East Hampton, NY 11937
TELEPHONE: (516) 324-4100
GRADE SPAN: 4-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 317
CONTACT: Jay Niles, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The East Hampton Middle School consists of 320 students in grades 4 through 8. The school has a grades 4-5 house and a grades 6-8 house. In an effort to provide a common planning period for the house teams, a "Common Time" was incorporated into the master schedule. "Common Time" is scheduled in the following manner. The school day for students is 6 hours and 40 minutes. This time period consists of nine teaching blocks. The length of each block is different for the two houses. The grades 4-5 "Common Time" of 40 minutes per day resulted from scheduling the students for physical education/health or music/art/library. The grades 6-8 "Common Time" resulted from scheduling all the students for music during one time block. The common time periods are utilized by the grades 4-5 teachers to jointly plan each week's lessons,

create common projects, and meet with parents. Once a week, these teachers, the principal, and the special area tachers meet jointly during "Common Time" to discuss programs, curriculum, etc. The grades 6-8 teachers meet to discuss topics such a honor roll, reporting to parents, interdisciplinary projects, and other common interests. One of the positive aspects of "Common Time" is the opportunity for the student services personnel to discuss children who are receiving counseling, etc. In addition to common planning, the time period is used for Professional Circle meetings. Professional Circles are committees created by teachers to address certain issues.

The Professional Circles include the Student Recognition Committee, Student/Teacher Advisory Committee, Student Discipline Comittee, Building Budget Committee, and Building Improvement Team (Comprehensive School Improvement Program). The common period allows these committee to meet during the school day.

In summary, "Common Time" allows the staff to:

- Plan weekly lessons.
- Review curriculum and projects.
- Plan interdisciplinary projects.
- Meet with Professional Circle Committees.
- Discuss children.

The "Common Time" program provides teachers opportunities to jointly plan activities and programs for their common students. Since the school has approximately 60 students at each grade level, teacher teams are able to share responsibility for a common group of students. An improved sense of professionalism has been generated among teachers as they use "Common Time" to discuss school issues, plan assistance for children, and meet with parents. The program has increased teacher involvement in the decision-making process.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Elwood Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Elwood Middle School
ADDRESS: 478 Elwood Road
East Northport, NY 11731
TELEPHONE: (516) 266-5420
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 445
CONTACT: Arthur Strassle, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

When the Elwood School District began exploring a middle school concept, a transitional design for the Grade 6 learning experience in a different environment was created. A key feature to that design was the formation of a teaching team with common planning time. Using that tie, Grade 6 staff were intensely involved in designing the daily schedule, planning assessment and grouping practices, organizing instructional activities, field trips, etc. Team planning affords opportunities to meet with administration, the librarian, reading specialist, a parent, or even a student. By teaching via a team approach, we have better utilization of staff strengths and more consistency in the delivery of services.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School
ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The design of teacher teams with common planning time was developed so that the same group of students would be with the same group of teachers throughout the day. The students and teachers all follow the same schedule, are located in the same area of the building, and all have the same guidance counselor and assistant principal at their disposal. This approach is a stepping store between the self-contained classes in the elementary schools and the departmentalized classes in the high school. The teachers know the students and see and interact with them more than once throughout the day. It allows flexibility in scheduling and allows teachers to work together to solve behavioral and instructional problems.

The teacher teams consist of five teachers in the areas of science, mathematics, social studies, reading, and English. Each teacher follows the same schedule of classes and has a common time off to plan. The planning time or prep time is used to hold meetings with parents, students, and/or "specials" teachers or to plan trips or activities. All teachers on the team are present during the prep time.

The middle school's very design was developed to deal with the conflicts of adolescence. Placing students with the same group of teachers for the year gives the students a sense of identity, as their teachers know them well and see and interact with them more often throughout the day. Common planning time among the teachers gives them the time to iron out difficulties some students may be having on the team. It allows flexibility in grouping the students and in dealing with behavioral problems.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Guidlerland Central School District
SCHOOL: Farnsworth Middle School
ADDRESS: State Farm Road
Guilderland, NY 12084
TELEPHONE: (518) 456-6010
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1312
CONTACT: Joseph E. Purcell, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

At Farnsworth Middle School there are three kinds of teaching teams - academic, special area, and department.

Academic Teams: Grade 6 academic teams are two-teacher teams responsbile for teaching math, science, social studies, and language arts. The teams are assigned a block of 225 minutes of teaching time per day for approximately 52 students; this includes the student lunch. The teachers also are assigned 15 minutes of school duty, 45 minutes of personal planning, 30 minutes for lunch, and 45 minutes for team planning. Teams always have their team planning time schedule together and more likely than not have their personal planning and lunch time scheduled together. Grade 7 and 8 academic teams are assigned the same as grade 6 academic teams except that there are four teachers and twice as many students.

Special Area Teams: Special area teams (art, music, home and career skills, and technology) are formed to serve students from specific academic teams. The special area teachers have varied amounts of teaching time (15-16 mods that are 15 minutes in length per day as an average), 15 minutes of school duty, 45 minutes of personal planning, and 30 minutes of team planning. Reading teachers, foreign language teachers, and physical education teachers work with students throughout the school. Thus, they work together as a team and are given 30 minutes of team planning time as are special area teachers. This allows them to share information to better serve students. Teaming leads to teachers being able to work cooperatively together to develop and implement strategies to meet student needs, to provide interdisciplinary programs, and to involve parents in their child's education. They provide a framework for teachers to get to know students very well, to provide first-level support, and to develop reinforcement programs that work. Teams are probably the most basic element of this school's organization.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 19 years

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

There are several different types of teams that interact with the students and among themselves. Each team has a daily planning period and a team leader.

- Each student is assigned to one of the academic teams, of which there are five. Sixth grade teams are three-person teams with each instructing one discipline, language arts, and a common subject among the three. Seventh and 8th grade teams are four-person teams with each teacher responsible for a specific subject matter (mathematics, English, science, and social studies), plus a related area in the language arts model.
- There are also interdisciplinary teams that draw students from the academic teams during the course of the day. These include the Support Team, which provides academic instruction to special needs students, offers Resource Room help, and provides support to nonclassified students in the mainstream; the Skills Reinforcement Team, which works in one or more subjects with students who are two or more years behind their peers in reading and/or mathematics and experiencing difficulty in the mainstream classes; and the Unified Arts Team, which works with the students from each team in the areas of home and careers, technology, art, and music.
- There are disciplinary teams in physical education and reading that also draw students from the academic teams in a specific module.

Each of these teams has a common planning time five days a week.

Each team has a team leader who is appointed for no more than three years. Team leaders meet once a month after school on items submitted by the staff and/or administration, as well as once a week at the beginning of the day. Team leaders are relieved of homeroom assignment to accomplish team business and meet with each other.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Hicksville School District #17
SCHOOL: Hicksville Middle School
ADDRESS: Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801
TELEPHONE: (516) 933-6521
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 679
CONTACT: Marie E. Marshall, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The creation of effective interdisciplinary teams was a major goal of our middle school planning. Each grade level (7 and 8) is divided into three student teams (Red, White, and Blue). An English, mathematics, social studies, and science teacher is assigned to each team; therefore, this group of professionals shares a common student "family." Only in the case of grade 8 honors science, the earth science Regents course, is there a deviation. However, the relatively small number of students affected by this deviation has not impacted negatively on the process.

The "team family" concept has encouraged staff to become more involved with the social and emotional development, as well as the academic achievement, of their youngsters. One of the team planning periods per week is attended by the guidance counselor, who serves as a resource person. Three times a year, in October, January, and May, a full week is devoted to an academic review of each student's achievement. This evaluation is supported by the counselor's presentation of standardized test scores and team teachers' anecdotal and class records. Once a month, the teachers of the resource room are scheduled to meet with the teams to share instructional strategies and insights into the needs of their students. Similarly, the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher meets with the teams to share her knowledge about the ESL students who are on each team. Teams often request students and/or parents at meetings; in addition, parents are encouraged to request meetings with the team. When appropriate, the psychologist attends team-parent meetings, and special- area teachers can also attend these sessions.

Because of the success of the team model, one team has been expanded this year to include a foreign language teacher. This team has also been designed to have academic block scheduled time in order to allow flexibility in instruction and activities. The effectiveness of this pilot team will be assessed in May 1990.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Irvington Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Irvington Middle School
ADDRESS: 101 Main Street
Irvington, NY 10533
TELEPHONE: (914) 591-9394
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 240
CONTACT: Andrew C. Kerfut, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Irvington Middle School utilizes a coordinated team-of-teachers model at each grade level (6-7-8), with all teachers at a grade level considered to be members of that grade-level team. Team leaders are appointed annually and receive a contractually determined stipend. Team planning time is established from 8:00-8:30 a.m. each day, which is 30 minutes before pupils enter the building in the morning. Due to the incidence of shared teachers at two or three grade levels, the teams meet formally two or three times each week. In this way, a shared teacher is able to attend team meetings at each grade level.

Parent-team conferences are scheduled as needed during the team planning time, with individual grade 6 Parent-Teacher Conferences scheduled at 15-minute intervals during two mornings and two afternoons in the sixth week of school, after Interim Reports have been sent home. The Guidance Office schedules and coordinates all the 8:00-8:30 a.m. parent-team conferences. These are initiated by either the teams or parents.

Teacher assignment to grade-level teams is made by the building principal with input from program chairs who have supervisory responsibility for grades 6-12. Consideration for assignment to grade-level teams is based on a number of factors including, but not restricted to, the following: balance of men and women teachers on a team; balance of preferred teaching styles; curricular expertise, especially as it relates to potential interdisciplinary units of study; and expressed teacher preference for a particular grade-level assignment.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Charles Holland, Guidance Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Every student at the middle school is part of an academic team of teachers:

5th grade — 2 two-person teams, 1 three-person team

6th grade — 1 four-person team, 1 three-person team
7th & 8th grades — 2 four-person teams

Each team has a common planning time every day to meet for a variety of reasons. During team time, the following might take place:

- Parent conference
- Plan interdisciplinary project.
- Meet with counselor to discuss individual students.
- Meet with support personnel, i.e., remedial and special education teachers.
- Design the schedule for the following week.
- Plan field trips, etc.
- Meet with administrators.

Students assigned to a team would be at a special area while the team meets. The team meeting lasts approximately 35 minutes.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 22 years

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DISTRICT: Kings Park Central School District
SCHOOL: William T. Rogers Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Dock Road
Kings Park, NY 11754
TELEPHONE: (516) 269-3270
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 970
CONTACT: George Duffy, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Team teaching at the William T. Rogers Middle School consists of three-member teams in grades 5 and 6 and four-member teams in grades 7 and 8. Team teachers have common instructional periods, lunch periods, and are provided with both team-planning time and individual preparation time.

In the 5th and 6th grade program, departmentalization occurs in mathematics, science and social studies. Students are heterogeneously grouped for instruction in grades 5 through 8. Teams in grades 5 and 6 are composed of approximately 75 students while the average size of the 7th and 8th grade team is approximately 80 students.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis Tosetto, Principal
Holly Cannon, 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

All teachers utilize a team approach and meet daily during 42 minutes of common team planning time. Grades 6, 7, and 8 are each divided into two academic teams (English, science, social studies, and mathematics). Exploratory and special education teachers form separate instructional teams. Each team designates a facilitator, recorder, student recordkeeper, and a teacher responsible for team communications and articulation. Middle school instructional teams utilize a formal intervention process to meet identified student needs and maintain daily minutes of team meetings. Teams regularly meet with individual students and parents to discuss progress and mutually agree to intervention strategies. Both academic teams at each grade level have common team planning time and regularly schedule grade-level meetings during the school day. The schedule and building systems allow any staff member to meet with any team as needed. Counselors and remedial and special education teachers meet on a regular basis with academic team teachers to articulate program needs for all shared students and to assist with program needs of other team students not assigned to a special program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Mineola Central School District
SCHOOL: Mineola Middle School
ADDRESS: 200 Emory Road
Mineola, NY 11501
TELEPHONE: (516) 741-4943
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Fern Moskowitz, Administrative Assistant

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Mineola Middle School has initiated a pilot program in team teaching. It involves 100 7th grade students, heterogeneously grouped for their four content-area subjects (social studies, math, science, and English). The team shares primary responsibility for the educational decisions surrounding its students. The team works very closely. It begins each day with a team meeting period during which everything pertinent to the students is discussed including learning styles, learning and discipline problems, common rules, scheduling options, interdisciplinary/thematic units, meeting with parents, large/small group

instruction, students and what can be done to reward those who are trying, etc.

Mineola Middle School's teaming program is an attempt to: organize instruction in an interdisciplinary manner; provide students with a highly personalized, supportive environment; allow for variation in scheduling and grouping; allow for differentiated approaches in order to meet the needs of students; empower teachers by giving them responsibility for 100 students, budgeting, discipline, etc.

Additionally, the teaming truly concerns itself with the total growth of the child - socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Part of this is accomplished because the team has truly established the necessary home-school link. Starting at the very beginning of the school year, the entire team meets privately with each child's parent/guardian. During the meeting, which serves also as an intake interview and a "Getting To Know You" session for all participants, the parent shares whatever information he or she feels will help the team work with the child.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Nanuet Union Free School District
SCHOOL: A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
ADDRESS: 143 Church Street
Nanuet, NY 10954
TELEPHONE: (914) 623-1266
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 475
CONTACT: Peter S. Bydlik, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

At the A. MacArthur Barr Middle School, teachers are grouped for organizational purposes into grade-level teams. Each team consists of an English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and special education teacher. The principal regularly attends team meetings to discuss problems concerning that level. The foreign language teacher teaches both French and Spanish to all of the students on the grade level. This is in contrast to having a teacher for French and a teacher for Spanish who would teach multiple grade levels, an arrangement that could be scheduled. The special education teacher teaches a self-contained class, but many students are mainstreamed, dictating a need for close coordination by all members of the team. In some years, when scheduling permits, the special education teacher also handles the resource room for that grade level. This allows that teacher to sit in on team meetings for that grade level and have first-hand information regarding the instructional objectives, materials, testing dates, etc. of the regular education teachers. In years when the special education teachers cannot be scheduled in this manner, they are responsible for coordinating congruence efforts by maintaining contact with the resource room teachers and remedial teachers, informing them of the needs of their resource room students relative to their mainstream classes.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Rhinebeck Central School District
SCHOOL: Bulkeley Middle School
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 351
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
TELEPHONE: (914) 876-3075
GRADE SPAN: 6-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 173
CONTACT: Neal Silvernail, Paul Hallenbeck, Patrick Kern

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The Bulkeley Middle School has three teaching teams, each headed by a team leader. Team Six and Team Seven are composed of those respective grades' academic teachers. The Life-Long Learning team is composed of the music, art, physical education, technology, and home and career skills teachers. The teams have a common planning time daily. They meet to discuss students, to participate in schoolwide decision making, and to manage the affairs of the team. A budget is prepared by each team based on its allocation. Teams meet with parents and hold bimonthly Child Study meetings where they are joined by the school psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, and principal.

Once a week, the Bulkeley Instructional Council (BIC) meets. BIC is composed of the three team leaders and the principal. Major decisions regarding school programs, staff development, the calendar, and special events are made here. After school is over in June, BIC meets to review the year and to create a Master Plan that is presented for approval to all staff in September.

Having a set time daily for the team to meet, sharing outcomes in a weekly summary, and using the team as a means for involving all teachers in making schoolwide decisions are important components of teaming at Bulkeley Middle School.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Scarsdale Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Scarsdale Junior High School
ADDRESS: Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
TELEPHONE: (914) 472-3478
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 840
CONTACT: Peter Telfer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Scarsdale Junior High School has three academic houses and an alternative program for 50 students. In each house there is an interdisciplinary team, which consists of an English, social studies, science, and mathematics teacher for each grade. The academic teachers work with 80-100 students. They are required to teach four academic classes and they have a fifth assignment. The fifth assignment includes at least one period a week in the learning centers, some supervised study periods, and team meetings. The teams generally meet at least twice a week under the direction of a house counselor. Their common planning time is scheduled when their students are in special subject areas or foreign language. They also have individual planning time.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

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DISTRICT: Schenectady City School District
SCHOOL: Central Park Middle School
ADDRESS: Elm Street
Schenectady, NY 12304
TELPHONE: (518) 370-8250
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 460
CONTACT: Eric Neils, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: d

Beginning in the 1988-89 school year, the sixth grade teachers formed an interdisciplinary team, which included teachers in all core subject areas, and special area teachers where possible. The core subject teachers had a common planning period daily. This time was used for a variety of purposes including curriculum development, child study discussions, parent conferences, and special event planning. One administrator was a member of the team and attended planning meetings twice per week.The team also developed its own common discipline procedures, based upon the Assertive Discipline methods. They also established and conducted their own detention programs, during which teachers volunteered to remain after school on a weekly basis to stay with those sixth-graders who had been asked to stay for disciplinary reasons. A team detention form was developed, which students were required to complete during their detention stay. The team approach afforded the middle school the elementary school, one teacher total child experience while maintaining the academic integrity of the secondary schedule. It has been expanded this year to include the seventh grade.

This teaming approach has led to opportunities, both formal and informal, for more relevant staff development experiences and for a greater acceptance of the concept of the peer coach. It has eliminated much teacher isolation and has resulted in a renewed and revitalized sixth grade faculty. A special aspect of the team approach is the inclusion of the administrator as a team member in a supportive, instructional leadership role, while maintaining equality of status on the team itself.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Sherrill City School District
SCHOOL: Vernon Verona Sherrill Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 31, Box 128
Verona, NY 13478
TELEPHONE: (315) 363-4200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 383
CONTACT: Robert Biehl, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The VVS Middle School has developed a team-teaching situation with two unique features. One unique feature is the inclusion of a foreign language, health, and a reading teacher on the teams. A second feature is that the unified arts teachers (art, home and careers, etc.) have a team planning period. Teams have approximately 90 students divided into five sections. Each team has a common lunch and individual preparation and team planning periods. This year, for the first time, teams are working on team goals that they developed last spring. During team planning, a number of topics are covered. Following is a list of topics:

- Student activities
- Student behavior
- Parent conferences
- Interdisciplinary units
- Coordination of field trips
- Meetings with support staff
- In-service/informational sessions.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

All academic teams and the related arts team have a daily team planning time (one 40-minute period) each in addition to the individual teacher's preparation period (one 40-minute period). All students on the team are assigned to related arts classes while their academic teachers have their team planning time.

During this team meeting time, the guidance department and resource room teacher attend weekly. The librarian and enrichment teacher (grade 6) attend monthly. Parent conferences are held during this time.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Troy City School District
SCHOOL: W. K. Doyle Middle School
ADDRESS: 1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
TELEPHONE: (518) 271-5352
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 782
CONTACT: James M. Gorman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The W. K. Doyle Middle School has six teams, three at grade 7 and three at grade 8. Each team has five teachers (mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, and foreign language). These five members meet daily for 45 minutes during team planning time. Each team has a team leader who is responsible for developing the agenda and chairing the meeting.

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DISTRICT: Union Springs Central School District
SCHOOL: Union Springs Jr./Sr. High School
ADDRESS: 27 North Cayuga Street
Box 507
Union Springs, NY 13160
TELEPHONE: (315) 889-7373
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 408
CONTACT: Bruce R. Sharpe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Union Springs Jr./Sr. High School houses students grades 7-12, and as of September 1986, began phasing in a middle school concept. Each year Union Springs Jr./Sr. High School averages between 70-100 students at both the 7th and 8th grade levels.

Until 1986, a "Jr. High School" model existed. There was no recognition that a middle school (grades 7 and 8) existed separately from the high school. The 7th and 8th grade academic subject areas were almost a scheduling "afterthought." For the students, two or three different teachers were teaching each of the 7th grade subject areas (such as three different teachers teaching 7th grade English). The same was true at the 8th grade level. For academic teachers, most had schedules that emphasized high school - for instance, most had three or four high school sections and only one or two middle school sections. The result was that teachers tended to put most of their time and emphasis on their high school students. It should be noted that this is not that uncommon in smaller schools where students in grades 7-12 are housed in one building.

A middle school concept was introduced in order to better meet the needs of our students. The philosophy was that students who are either preadolescents or very young adolescents have different needs than older high school students and should be treated on a different basis. For each grade level (7th and 8th grade), one teacher was assigned for each of the four academic areas. Therefore, for instance, all 7th grade English students had the same teacher. Likewise, 8th grade students have the same academic classes (likewise four 8th grade academic classes for the 8th grade team teachers) with only one nonmiddle school teaching assignment. An period day (not including lunch) was created not only to better meet the new and expanded Regents Action Plan mandates but also to provide team planning time for each of these teachers. Both the 7th grade academic teachers and the 8th grade academic teachers meet daily in a team meeting. It should be noted that each of these teachers still had his or her own individual prep period in addition to team planning time - team planning time was created by assigning each of these academic teachers one *less* duty assignment (such as study hall).

Failure rates for 7th and 8th grade students have dropped dramatically. Teachers have a chance to meet and generally discuss concerns regarding individual students and strategies to help students cope with their problems (academic and social). Team planning time also provides an opportunity for other 7th and 8th grade teachers (Occ Ed, etc.) to periodically meet with the 7th and 8th grade teams. Students now really feel that they are a part of their own school, and the middle school has its own identity. Potential for interdisciplinary projects is greatly increased because the teaching teams are able to meet on a daily basis. Also, 7th and 8th grade field trips (both academic and social) are now more available for the middle school students.

There are many small rural school districts in New York State that have configurations housing grades 7-12 students together in one building. In such situations, it is not uncommon to establish a "Jr. High School concept" whereby all students (grades 7-12) are treated basically the same way. The biggest cost in introducing a middle school concept such as previously described in a rural school is the cost of freeing up middle school teachers from some duties in order that they may meet regularly on a daily basis. As previously described, the results (including a lower failure rate and better meeting the needs of middle school-level students), make it well worth this cost.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Valley Stream Central High School
SCHOOL: Valley Stream North High School
ADDRESS: 750 Herman Avenue
Franklin Square, NY 11010
TELEPHONE: (516) 561-7903
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 690
CONTACT: Robert Alden, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Sharing the responsibility for the education of a common group of students has been a focus in this district. With this in mind, teacher teams, with common planning time, have been established. Teachers of English, social studies, mathematics, and science meet (in lieu of a building assignment) to articulate and coordinate their work and their input about the students. During this planning period, the team teachers coordinate field studies, create lessons where there is congruence in assignments, exchange ideas for reinforcement of terminology in an intradepartmental manner, and organize team-teaching projects and interdisciplinary library research units. In addition, this common time affords the teachers an opportunity to help each other with classroom management. Common practices and rules among the disciplines are stressed. Guidance counselors and administrators meet with the team to help promote student achievement. In addition, team reporting to the home is a practice of the group.

The interdisciplinary approach also provides the counselor and the administrator responsible for discipline at this level the opportunity to meet with the teachers to coordinate guidance-related activities for individual students. Feedback to the counselor by the team members gives invaluable information regarding academic performance and/or suspected problem areas regarding individual students.

Teachers have found this meeting time an invaluable tool, and the students reap the benefits of the teachers establishing common practices. Youngsters in this age group appear to function with greater ease because their teachers are in accord concerning educational goals and classroom behavior.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Weedsport Central School District
SCHOOL: Weedsport Junior-Senior High School
ADDRESS: 2821 E. Brutus Street
P.O. Box 3000
Weedsport, NY 13166
TELEPHONE: (315) 834-6652
GRADE SPAN: 6-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 525
CONTACT: Nelson Bauersfled, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: d

Team planning has been a component of our middle school program since its inception. Daily scheduled team planning time exists for core course teachers in grades 6, 7, and 8. In addition special area teachers, special education teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators regularly attend team planning meetings. Team planning sessions focus on interdisciplinary planning, parent-teacher-student conferences; student-teacher tutoring sessions and a variety of other activities designed to make the educational and social support program for students more effective.

Students have benefited immeasurably by these programs, not necessarily as isolated programs but in combination with each other. Students are performing well on standardized tests and are developing maturity and positive attitudes toward school.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

Area e

Implementing Student Grouping Strategies that Maintain Heterogeneous Classes, Grouping Only for Specific Purposes and for Brief Periods

Schools recognize the negative effects of a rigid tracking system on students. This section provides examples and models of alternative ways middle-level schools have developed to teach heterogeneously grouped classes effectively.

Area e: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bedford Central School District
  Fox Lane Middle School
- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- Connetquot Central School District of Islip
  Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School
- Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
  Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Guilderland Central School District
  Farnsworth Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Irvington Union Free School District
  Irvington Middle School
- Nanuet Union Free School District
  A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newark Valley Central School District
  Newark Valley Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- Niskayuna Central School District
  Iroquois Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- North Salem Central School District
  North Salem Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Port Jefferson Union Free School District
  Port Jefferson Junior High School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Weedsport Central School District
  Weedsport Junior-Senior High School

DISTRICT: Bedford Central School District
SCHOOL: The Fox Lane Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 172
Bedford, NY 10506
TELEPHONE: (914) 241-6126
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Dennis McGrath, Director

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREA: e

One of the most unique programs at the Fox Lane Middle School is the Graded and the Ungraded Houses. The Graded House is a traditionally organized house that consists of three teams of 100 students who are grouped by grade and age, i.e. all sixth-graders on one team, seventh-graders on a second team, and eighth-graders on a third team.

The Ungraded House is a program that takes the middle school philosophy of heterogeneous grouping to yet a new level. Each of the three teams in the Ungraded House has 100 students. However, each team is composed roughly of one-third sixth-graders, one-third seventh-graders, and one-third eighth-graders. Thus each of the teams is integrated with students at each grade level as well as each learning level. Classes are equally integrated with students of each grade heterogeneously grouped for academic classes, unified arts classes, music classes, and physical education classes. The only tracked classes are in 8th grade mathematics and some foreign language classes.

An extensive evaluation of this two-house system was performed in 1985-86 and the findings were favorable.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Bronxville Middle School recognizes that rigid teaching strategies for students can have a detrimental effect on a student's self-esteem. Likewise, staff feel that in certain areas it is important to regroup students for instruction, and we have a number of courses that operate at a slower pace than the regular classroom sections. This group of classes has been very successful, and students, parents, and teachers equally agree that the benefits have been impressive.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Columbus Academy works on a trimester basis. At the beginning of each trimester, the student chooses which literature, social studies, science, and elective courses he or she would like to take. The groupings are heterogeneous, multigraded, and dependent on the student's choice. There are other groupings as well -writers' workshops and gym are also heterogeneous and multigraded. Latin, the required foreign language, art history, guidance, and family living are by grade. The only groupings that are constant for the year are the single-grade groupings. All others change three times a year.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Connetquot Central School District of Islip
SCHOOL: Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakdale Bohemia Road
Oakdale, NY 11769
TELEPHONE: (516) 244-2266
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 780
CONTACT: Terry S. Earley, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Implementation of Student Grouping Strategies

Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School has been using the "team teaching" concept for the past 20 years. Teams are comprised of four teachers, one of each from the areas of mathematics, science, English, and social studies. They have a common period off, which allows for team meetings with administration, parent conferences, and Child Study meetings with our support staff (psychologist, youth and family social worker, attendance officer, etc.)

This overall concept of "team teaching," along with the advent of computerized scheduling has allowed for a new dimension to group the students. The experience of the team

teachers combined with the most recent research indicates that middle school children are more successful in a heterogeneous class grouping. How does one do this while still identifying those students who may be weaker than the others? The answer at Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School is to create two tracking levels that are combined in one class. The two levels involved are: Developmental (the below-average students) and Regents (the average to above-average students who will be seeking a NYS Regents Diploma). For example, Teacher Jones will be teaching English Regents and English Developmental at the same time in the same room. The number of Regents students is limited to 20 and the number of Developmental students to five. In other words, a few Developmental students are mixed in with a maximum of 20 Regents students. However, while the students are combined into one class, the computer generates two separate class lists for the teacher, which identify which students are Developmental and which are Regents. The student's report card also will designate the level. It also allows a student to be moved up a level or down a level without disrupting a student's schedule. The student can be moved from a Developmental track to a Regents track while remaining in the same class, thus alleviating any disruption for the student. By using this system, the Developmental student is in a class with students who generally have better work habits and who take school more seriously. At the same time, they maintain their Developmental designation, which allows the teacher to identify those students who may need more help than the others.

Implementation of Student Grouping Strategies

By offering seventh-graders 10 weeks of careers and 20 weeks of technology, there is a 10-week period that normally would be scheduled as a study hall.

However, Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School recognizes that seventh-graders need help in making the transition from elementary level to the junior high/middle school level. These students come from a self-contained elementary school environment with one teacher to a seventh-grade schedule that may expose the child to eight different teachers during the course of the day. The seventh-grader can get somewhat overwhelmed with the new structure. Oakdale-Bohemia Junior High School has instituted a 10-week course entitled "Study Skills" in the slot where a study hall would normally be. Its purpose is to facilitate the transition from the elementary level to the middle school level and to provide each student with the study skills and strategies necessary to be successful.

The outline of the curriculum is as follows:

Organization of Self and Environment

- Assessment of study skills and habits
- Establishing priorities
- Establishing goals
- Organizing information-notebook
- Improving memory
- Establishing study environment and study schedule.

General Reading Skills

- Vocabulary (word origins, vocabulary in context, key words)
- Comprehension skills (main idea, sequencing, drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, summarizing, scanning, skimming)
- Flexibility of speed
- Reading in content areas
- Literal and inferential comprehension.

Study Skills and Habits

- Taking notes
- Outlining-mapping
- Listening-speaking skills
- SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review)
- Following directions
- Questioning while reading.

Location and Reference Skills

- Using the library
- Using reference books
- Interpreting graphs, charts, maps, diagrams, etc.

Test-Taking Techniques

- Preparing for exams
- Taking essay, objective, and standardized tests.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
ADDRESS: Larkin Place
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
TELEPHONE: (914) 271-2191
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 285
CONTACT: Joseph Zajac, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

The dangers of homogeneous grouping among middle-level students have been alluded to in recent months in both the "Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education..." and "Turning Points," the Report of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. The latter document refers to tracking as "one of the most divisive and damaging school practices in existence."

At Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, the goal of maximizing heterogeneous classes is attained in several ways. Homeroom assignments at the 6th and 7th grade levels are made without consideration of academic ability, and whenever possible, self-contained students are assigned to a mainstream homeroom as well. Locker assignments, class photos, field trips, programs, assemblies, and other aspects of the school program are handled in a similar manner, which emphasizes heterogeneity and minimizes the alienation, social, and emotional problems associated with homogeneous grouping.

Based upon standardized test scores, qualifying tests, and teacher recommendations, some math and language arts students are placed into special small-group classes. These small-group classes are scheduled by dividing a homeroom into two smaller classes for one period. For example, homeroom 8A might go to two different teachers for mathematics. Ms. X might have a group of seven or eight students who require special support, while Mr. Y has the rest of the group for math. These students, however, are reunited with their homeroom classmates for other subjects throughout the day.

Remediation in mathematics, reading, and writing is also expressed during a special period each day known as workshop period. Small groups of five to eight students meet with a teacher every other day for individualized work designed to remediate their weaknesses and capitalize on their strengths. During workshop period, students also take part in activities such as individual and group counseling, resource room support, and our independent study enrichment program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 10 years

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School
ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Our school runs on an eight-period day. During the time when our students are "on team," located within the same area of the building for their main subjects, they are tracked according to ability groups. However, when the students leave the team area, they are heterogeneously grouped for band, chorus, unified arts, gym, computers, and lunch.

The teachers decide which ability group the student is in, and grouping is flexible within the team. In certain instances, students are placed on another team for one class so that they can follow the normal team schedule but be allowed to accelerate or get extra help in certain areas.

Students are also grouped with members of other teams for lunch, band, chorus, and foreign language.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 10-15 years

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DISTRICT: Guilderland Central School District
SCHOOL: Farnsworth Middle School
ADDRESS: State Farm Road
Guilderland, NY 12084
TELEPHONE: (518) 456-6010
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1312
CONTACT: Joseph Purcell, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

In this school, heterogeneous grouping is the basis for instruction in all classes with the exception of accelerated classes in grade 8. Students in grades 6-8 are assigned to teams and the teachers have the opportunity to create groups for instruction. The groups are expected to be, and are in fact, heterogeneous. They are, however, flexible and the makeup of a NY group can be changed at the team of teachers' discretion. Two-person grade 6 teacher teams have about 52 students to organize into groups, and four-person grade 7 & 8 teacher teams have about 104 students to organize into groups. Teams of teachers have more than the normal amount of class time to meet with students, and they control when and in what size groups the students go to lunch. This allows for opportunities for teachers to work with small groups of students during the school day in addition to class time. This is an example of heterogeneous and flexible grouping. Teachers control the group make-up and can tailor it to fit the instructional activity. It provides opportunities for small-group instruction in addition to classroom instruction. Groups can change on a daily basis if necessary without a NY involvement of people other than the teachers.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500

GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Students are assigned heterogeneously to each homeroom on an academic team. Throughout the day, they move as a heterogeneous group among their academic classes. During one module, they attend physical education, where the physical education team regroups them throughout the year depending upon the activity; coeducational and small-group activities such as aerobics and Project Adventure are examples of how students are regrouped. During another module, students are regrouped for their Unified Arts experiences; in the 8th grade, students with exceptional talent are given the opportunity to participate in Accelerated Art for approximately half a year, but then they are regrouped for the remainder of their Unified Arts experience. There is also another module, known as the Music Supplement, when all of the students who are involved in Band, Orchestra, or MOVAPA leave the team for these performing groups. The remaining students stay with their academic teams and are regrouped throughout the year for extra help, enrichment, projects, or make-up work. In addition, there are times when students are regrouped for other activities. There is a gifted and talented program, which draws students on a rotating basis from six different classes during a two-week period; during this time, this humanities-based program meets in small groups in grades 6, 7, and 8. We also offer a course called Enriched English. This is a time when students who have outstanding ability are regrouped in English; this meets for half a year during the Language Arts module, in addition to the heterogeneous English cla[illegible] Finally, 6th and 7th grade students may participate in an enriched mathematics program. These mathematics students remain with their homeroom for mathematics but work individually, and at times independently, within the mathematics classroom. They are regrouped twice a week for group instruction.

Blue Mountain has been a school that has always believed in heterogeneity. Recognizing that students have exceptional needs in all subject areas, the school has attempted to meet them by regrouping for units or for smaller segments of the school day or school year. By keeping the academic classes heterogeneously grouped, the school avoided the stigma commonly associated with homogeneous groups. Students realize that depending on the subject or the unit, they may find themselves with a new group of peers. The school has also utilized this approach in addressing the needs of students who need remedial help, as well as those who will be accelerated. In mathematics, for example, this approach has minimized the need to group for instruction prior to the offering of Course I in the 8th grade. To offer Course I, all of these students are pulled together when the rest of the team is in physical education, and they attend physical education with students from the other team. In addition, they are able to remain with their home based groups for heterogeneous instruction in the other academic classes. Students can also move into or out of the Skills Reinforcement program for one or more subjects depending upon their progress. In addition, rather than having a traditional study hall, the use of the Music Supplement has made a more constructive use of time for the students as identified. During this period, it is common for the teams to regroup the students, many times during the year for project work, or to meet the individual needs of students for assistance or challenge as the year goes on.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 15 years

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DISTRICT: Irvington Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Irvington Middle School
ADDRESS: 101 Main Street
Irvington, NY 10533
TELEPHONE: (914) 591-9494
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 240
CONTACT: Andrew C. Kerfut, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

At Irvington Middle School, a combination of heterogeneous and homogeneous class groupings are utilized. Homogeneous grouping is done for mathematics at all three grade levels and for grade 6 developmental reading. Acceleration opportunities are provided for qualified 8th grade pupils in mathematics, science, art, and instrumental music. All homogeneous grouping is done with an eye toward flexibility to accommodate achievement changes that occur within each ability group. Thus, pupils are not locked into inappropriate learning situations.

Modified mainstream science and social studies classes are created for classified and some remedial pupils, but in all other classes, i.e., English, social studies, unified arts, health, physical education, etc., the classes are heterogeneously grouped. In an academically oriented community, with extremely high parental aspirations for their children beyond high school, the debate over pupil placement at the middle school level receives significant attention. While the literature strongly advocates exclusive use of heterogeneous grouping and its noteworthy advocacy of cooperative learning, Irvington Middle School's mixed model of primarily heterogeneous grouping with selective homogeneous grouping clearly meets the state and community mandates for attending to the individual needs of all our pupils.

The significance of the Irvington Middle School model of heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping is quite simple - it works in a small, academically-oriented school district.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAVE BEEN IN PLACE:

Grouping for mathematics-12 years
Grouping for Science-6 years
Grouping for Art and instrumental music-3 years
Heterogeneous grouping all other subjects-12 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Nanuet Union Free School District
SCHOOL: A. MacArthur Barr Middle School
ADDRESS: 143 Church Street
Nanuet, NY 10954
TELEPHONE: (914) 623-1266
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 475
CONTACT: Peter S. Bydlik, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

The A. MacArthur Barr Middle School has for many years had a Personalized Educational Program (PEP) that meets a variety of needs for our middle school students. While believing very strongly in an untracked, heterogeneously grouped middle school, the middle school nevertheless recognizes the special individual needs of students. PEP is a program that provides one 30-minute period per day, for each student, so that each student receives instruction geared to his or her specific educational needs. Each grade level in the middle school has a different 30-minute period during which all of the students at that grade level attend their PEP class. For some students whose particular need and academic level dictate that they require remediation in a particular subject, remedial reading, writing, or mathematics is the PEP class. For other students who demonstrate exceptional ability in a particular area, the PEP class is one in Shakespeare, aeronautics, or great books. For other students, enrichment courses in French cooking, folk tales, or debating fill the PEP period.

Each PEP class is taught by a member of the grade-level team, including remedial and special education teachers. Teachers are encouraged to develop PEPs based on their areas of expertise and interest. Teachers then develop criteria for placing students in each PEP and meet as a team at the beginning of each PEP Cycle to divide the grade into the various PEPs. Each team has the flexibility to schedule PEPs for any number of weeks depending on the needs of the grade.

One of the great corollary benefits of the PEP program is its elimination of the need for a pull-out program in remedial instruction, resource room, or gifted and talented instruction. Since every student in the grade is in a PEP course, no students are receiving instruction in basic subject areas. No student is missing instruction on material that will later be included on a test. PEP has eliminated the situation in which a remedial student, who has already demonstrated academic difficulties, is asked to catch up on work he has missed due to being pulled out of class. Additionally, there is less stigma associated with remedial and resource room classes, since students are not absent from their regular classes in order to receive these services. Students do not receive grades for PEP but instead receive a progress report. There are no tests and little homework is assigned.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 8 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

The Consultant Teacher program is being tried for the second year on an informal basis. Each day, the consultant teacher is assigned to a regular classroom where several resource room students are in attendance. The resource room teacher assists the students as well as helping the students to complete their assignments on time. The advantages to the program are that extra help is readily available for the students. The resource teacher is well informed about the details and directions for the assignments for which the students are responsible. The teacher can then anticipate problems the students may have and plan accordingly.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Newark Valley Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Valley Middle School
ADDRESS: Whig Street
Newark Valley, NY 13811
TELEPHONE: (607) 642-5524
GRADE SPAN: 4-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 555

CONTACT: Robert Gwinn, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

At Newark Valley Middle School, teachers and administrators believe that flexible groupings are essential to meeting the needs of students. The school has developed a method of scheduling students by skill level in some courses and mixed level in others. This cluster model provides the midle school with an excellent alternative to rigid tracking. While students may best be served through instruction at an appropriate skill level in math (a homogeneous grouping) it may also be desirable to teach social studies or science to a mixed ability group of students (heterogeneous). Providing both in the same schedule format is a task foreign to many schools. The model described addresses scheduling students into academic classes that meet daily. Scheduling of exploratory and special-area classes is done by the principal and school counselor. Each teaching team is responsible for setting up its own cluster schedule within the blocks of instructional time provided.

To ensure proper placement of each student into his or her ability level, standardized tests and teachers' recommendations are considered. A student will be placed in low mathematics, average mathematics, or high mathematics, and low English, average English, or high English. Regardless of his or her mathematics ability, a student can be placed in any level of English or vice versa. Clusters, or groups, of 3-4 students of the same classification are generated. Brothers and sisters are not put in the same cluster, nor are potential "problem" combinations. Students within the same cluster will attend classes together all day. A letter is assigned to each cluster A, B,....Z, AA, BB,.... The number of clusters will vary from year to year, depending upon the number of students enrolled and their abilities. The model works well with any number of ability groups. An alternative social studies class could be added or an advanced English eliminated. The next step is to create a schedule that does not track a student and also provides various combinations of students in classes. All clusters containing students of low mathematics ability are scheduled into one period; all clusters containing students of low English ability are scheduled a different period, since there will be some students who are low in both mathematics and English. Likewise, schedule all high math students and high English students (mathematics and English are used as examples, the decision is a local one).

The schedule is then developed one period at a time. If cluster letters A, B, and C identify low mathematics students then cluster D-Z students are distributed among the remaining academic subjects, scattering the high mathematics and/or high English clusters as well. This procedure is followed for each period, using all cluster letters each period and not repeating a letter for any specific class. The resulting schedule has homogeneous groupings in math and English, but all other subjects have heterogeneous groups. The enrollment of each class is unique. The combination of clusters for a social studies class is different from any combination in science class. Student clusters provide the greatest possible mix of students in classes throughout the day. Students may be reassigned to a different cluster without disrupting the instructional program. This is helpful if there is a problem with student skills or behavior. Scheduling based upon individual needs is possible. It works best in a middle team environment (100-150 students per team). The teaching team is responsible for the schedule and ability groups necessary to accomplish program goals. Most importantly, each student has a schedule to meet his/her individual abilities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 7 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867
TELEPHONE: (607) 564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

All 7-8 classes and most 9-12 classes are grouped heterogeneously. The school provides the usual Chapter I services, and several teachers are experimenting with cooperative learning strategies. The biggest impact, however, comes in the ninth period, which is an activity period. This period is part of everyone's school day. Each 10 weeks, a range of activities, clubs, intramurals, and remediation is offered. In regard to remediation, a teacher of 8th grade social studies will have five students who are having difficulty. When those students are scheduled for the ninth period, they will automatically be placed with that teacher for one or two ninth periods a week. This is "extra help," not mandated remedial instruction.

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DISTRICT: Niskayuna Central School District
SCHOOL: Iroquois Middle School
ADDRESS: 2495 Rosendale Road
Schenectady, NY 12309
TELEPHONE: (518) 377-2233
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 809

CONTACT: Naomi Woolsey, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

Teaching teams at Iroquois Middle School are grouped heterogeneously each year as are the four sections that make up each team. Like the team, each section represents a cross-section of the total school population; this usually includes everyone from students identified as gifted to mainstreamed handicapped students. Classes are made up of these sections for the majority of the team, as well as the special-area classes. Teachers have developed instructional strategies at every grade level to provide challenge and rigor for each students commensurate with his or her ability. As part of the building-level staff development program, cooperative learning is being refined as another technique for providing solid instruction within a heterogeneous classroom.

Students are grouped in some classes but in ways that do not disrupt the heterogeneous grouping of other classes and the team in general. For instance, the school offers accelerated classes in mathematics and foreign language, remedial classes in mathematics and English, and enrichment through our Special Projects Program. Each team offers each of the above.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School
ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3251
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1001
CONTACT: Arthur P. Solnick, 6th Grade Program Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: c

The Robert Moses Middle School builds classes to create balanced heterogeneous groups of youngsters. This grouping practice is intended to:

- Create 12 carefully balanced classes for grouping into six two-teacher teams.
- Balance classes as carefully as possible using teacher recommendations as well as standardized achievement test scores and demographic data.
- Balance classes as carefully as possible with youngsters identified as: a) gifted, b) in need of remedial instruction in reading and math, c) resource room participants under an IEP.

The preparation for this careful and detailed grouping process involved many individuals in the North Babylon school community. The process was begun by the Director of Elementary Education in the creation of a "Grouping Data Card" containing key pieces of information. All 5th grade teachers completed a card for each 5th grade student: accurately listing standardized test scores; rating students as to scholarship, maturity, attitude, and behavior; and listing special health concerns, student's strengths, and other helpful hints. The Directors of Special Education, Mathematics, and Language Arts, as well as specific central office personnel, were consulted. The teachers of the Gifted and Talented Program were also given the opportunity for input prior to the start of the actual grouping process.

The careful placing of youngsters in heterogeneous "teams/groups" while providing the flexibility to address the needs of all youngsters through extensive mainstreaming and short-duration grouping should make available positive support for a comprehensive middle-level education. Heterogeneous grouping permits all youngsters to be exposed to a wide range of personalities and experiences. The extensive mainstreaming insures the full benefit of middle-level education for all youngsters. Positive support strengthens the student's feeling of self-worth and promotes the group's feeling of "family" in the class and grade. Although other avenues might have been available and even more expedient, the careful hand building of each class and team using student demographic data, achievement test scores, and teacher recommendation added the elements necessary for a comprehensive and joint effort. This "hands-on" approach to heterogeneous grouping also provided for the matching of teacher strengths with student needs while avoiding the tragic pitfall of reducing youngsters to just numbers. The practice of careful hand building of classes and matching teachers and students is far more effective in setting up heterogeneous groups of youngsters. It is by nature a more humanistic approach. The children should also feel more comfortable with their teachers and very likely will experience a more rapid adjustment to the middle school.

All things considered, comprehensive hand building of classes around the numerous variables places the student's needs as the number one priority.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: North Salem Central School District
SCHOOL: North Salem Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Route 124
North Salem, NY 10560

TELEPHONE: (914) 669-5414
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 195
CONTACT: Patricia P. Cyganovich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

North Salem Middle School believes that heterogeneous grouping allows for the academic, personal, and social development of youngsters at all ability levels. As a result, the following strategies are in place:

- On the 6th grade level, all students are heterogeneously grouped except for reading. Reading classes, though grouped by ability, are all scheduled during the same period to allow for flexibility among groups as appropriate. Mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts classes are so arranged in the schedule as to allow reorganization of classes as deemed necessary and appropriate by the teachers.
- On the 7th grade level, all students are heterogeneously grouped except for an enriched class of mathematics. The purpose of this homogeneously grouped class is to prepare students for an accelerated mathematics course in grade 8.
- On the 8th grade level, all students are heterogeneously grouped except for mathematics and science. Eighth grade students have the opportunity to participate in accelerated courses for Math Course I and Earth Science Regents.
- *All* middle school students participate heterogeneously in the following:
  - Foreign language
  - Technology
  - Home/careers
  - Band and/or chorus
  - Computer
  - Art
  - Physical education.
- In addition to the courses listed above, 7th grade students participate in health, Quest for Adolescence, and music appreciation.
- Eighth grade students are enrolled heterogeneously in Quest for Adolescence, Music Appreciation, and Study Skills programs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Oceanside Central School District
SCHOOL: Oceanside Middle School
ADDRESS: Alice & Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
TELEPHONE: (516) 678-1200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 810
CONTACT: Enio D'Arrigo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Oceanside Middle School offers a wide range of programs designed to meet the needs of students of all ability levels. Our most able students are offered accelerated math in both 7th and 8th grades, Regents earth science in 8th grade, introduction to foreign language in 7th grade followed by Level I of that foreign language in 8th grade, and the opportunity to participate in a gifted program. Students who need interventional or remedial help are provided with two to four additional periods of language arts or mathematics, and students with handicapping conditions may work in resource room, self-contained, and/or mainstreamed classes.

Each student at the middle school is assigned to a team. Each team consists of five classes (approximately 100-125 students). Each team has one mathematics class that is an accelerated math class. Students on each team are assigned to one of 13 possible schedules. This permits the students in accelerated math to meet together for that one class and then travel somewhat independently for the three other academic classes.

Gifted classes are available during an elective period, providing those students who meet standard criteria and those students who display a strong desire to participate an opportunity to do so for one period per day. At the present time, there are three earth science classes at the 8th grade level. Students are drawn from each of three 8th grade teams for this program. Interventional and remedial classes are offered during "lab" periods and during elective periods, permitting students to be grouped for the instruction for a specific time during the week. Special education classes parallel mainstream classes, permitting students easy access to the class that best suits their needs. Although complex, the scheduling pattern currently employed at Oceanside Middle School permits flexible groups.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 48

CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

All academic and developmental groupings are heterogeneous with the exception of mathematics and reading, which are ability grouped. Heterogeneous groupings have proved to be vastly superior to tracking. Teacher expectations, student performance, and student behavior have all been negatively affected by "occasional flirtation" with tracking.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Port Jefferson Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Port Jefferson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Spring Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
TELEPHONE: (516) 473-8151
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 264
CONTACT: Larry Lazar, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Because of the needs of middle school youth, the middle school in Port Jefferson has as part of its support and guidance program, regularly scheduled groups led by a guidance counselor. The groups meet for 8-to-10-week sessions, with rotating scheduled time periods.

The focus of the groups addresses the needs of adolescents, with much emphasis on the personal and social. Certain groups have a particular focus; one such particular group is for children experiencing separation, divorce, single-parent households, remarriage, reconstituted families, visitation, and so on. Most groups focus on social and personal concerns of adolescents, as well as supplying the skills that are necessary to assist the student in his or her transition from childhood to and through adolescence. Group sessions are planned around the following concerns and skills:

Building Self-Esteem

- By learning more about oneself and others
- By learning and practicing effective listening, responding, and validation skills
- By developing a sense of responsibility and cooperation within a group.

Learning About Emotions by Developing Competence in Self-Assessment and Self Discipline

- To understand that young adolescents experience a wide range of common feelings and that these feelings are normal
- To explore appropriate ways to communicate feelings
- To examine the range of emotions and to learn positive responses to outside influences
- To learn how positive emotions promote good feelings about oneself and others and how to perceive troubling emotions as positive challenges.

Friends Improving Peer Relationships

- To learn ways of building healthy relationships
- To be aware of and learn to respond appropriately to peer support and peer pressure
- To practice resisting negative peer pressure
- To learn to communicate effectively and handle conflict in relationships.

Developing Critical Thinking Skills for Decision Making

- To understand the processes that govern decision making
- To examine choices and consequences related to decisions
- To learn critical thinking skills as a way of reducing susceptibility to false or misleading information
- To practice ways of saying NO to pressures and influences
- To develop a plan for accepting personal responsibility for decisions.

Strengthening Family Relationships

- To involve the students in improving communication and problem solving in their own families
- To learn ways in which family members can enjoy each other's company
- To encourage greater appreciation of the value of positive family experiences.

Strengthening Goals for Healthy Living

- To help students plan for the future
- To guide the students in accepting responsibility for determining the quality of their lives
- To learn how to set goals effectively
- To help students understand how they can benefit from experiences of both success and failure.

Adolescents need a place to share their feelings, insecurities, fears, hopes, and desires. They need to hear that their peers are experiencing similar feelings and emotions. They need reassurance and skills to cope with their transition challenges.

For adolescents to be available to be successful intellectually, they must feel good about themselves personally and socially. The counseling groups program is one way to help accomplish this educational goals.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

The only "singletons" in the master schedule are 7XL Math (1 section), grade 8 Course I (1 section), grade 8 Advanced English (1 section), and accelerated foreign language (2 sections). The students are thoroughly remixed in all the rest of their classes. The curriculum provides for a wide range of abilities within the classroom, enrichment students to special education students. The curriculum, including activities and evaluation instruments, are modified to meet the needs of learning disabled students.

Compensatory students are serviced through an in-class remedial instruction program where the compensatory teacher works in the regular classroom with the primary instruction teacher.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

All students are required to study a foreign language at Stimson Junior High School, and they are afforded the opportunity to learn French, Italian, or Spanish in one of three groupings: Regents, local, or modified. The needs of the less-able learner are addressed through the modified program, which is a two-year sequence in which language skills and cultural awareness are both developed at a pace that will enable the student to become successful in his or her foreign language study.

The vast majority of students are enrolled in the other two strands, which are parallel and which share the same objectives and materials. A student placed in the local strand who shows early promise will be reassigned to the Regents strand: conversely, a student experiencing major difficulty with the Regents strand (which is accelerated) will be placed in the local strand. Ultimately the two programs merge for most students after grade 8, since students who have completed grades 7 and 8 in the local strand will have attained the same performance objectives as students who have completed grade 7 in the Regents strand.

The completely parallel local and Regents programs allow students the flexibility of moving from one grouping to another with relative ease. The move may be made as early as the beginning of grade 7 for some students, as late as the end of grade 8 for others, or even as late as the end of grade 9 for those who experience major difficulty. (Most students are in the Regents strand by the beginning of grade 9.)

The homogeneous grouping is maintained for the shortest period of time possible, and in no case later than the attainment of the outcomes listed for "Checkpoint A" in the New York State syllabus for foreign language instruction.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Weedsport Central School District
SCHOOL: Weedsport Junior-Senior High School
ADDRESS: 2821 E. Brutus Street
P.O. Box 3000
Weedsport, NY 13166
TELEPHONE: (315) 834-6652
GRADE SPAN: 6-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 525
CONTACT: Nelson Bauersfled, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: e

Grouping strategies have been implemented in the middle school which provide for both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping of students. In grade 6, students are homogeneously grouped for reading and math and heterogeneously grouped for all other subjects. In grades 7 and 8 there is homogeneous grouping for mathematics only. The goal of the grouping policy is to provide instruction at an appropriate level for all students while at the same time not creating the social stigma attached to being labeled as a "high" "middle" or "low" student. This program has significantly improved student attitudes and self-esteem in comparison to previous years when there was more homogeneous grouping.

Staff feel that students have benefited immeasurably by these programs, not necessarily as isolated programs but in combination with each other. Students are performing well on standardized tests and are developing maturity and positive attitudes toward school.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

Area f

Scheduling Flexible Time Assignments within Blocks of Time to Encourage Interdisciplinary Programs and Creative Time Use

Schools seeking alternative approaches to the traditional scheduling of students to support interdisciplinary instruction and more effective use of time will find several examples and models in this section.

Area f: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bedford Central School District
  Fox Lane Middle School
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Guilderland Central School District
  Farnsworth Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Lynbrook Union Free School District
  Lynbrook North Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Scarsdale Union Free School District
  Scarsdale Junior High School
- Troy City School District
  W. K. Doyle Middle School

DISTRICT: Bedford Central School District
SCHOOL: The Fox Lane Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 172
Bedford, NY 10506
TELEPHONE: (914) 241-6126
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Dennis McGrath, Director

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The schedule of the Fox Lane Middle School was originally designed to provide each academic team with the flexibility and common planning time daily. This block schedule has been slightly changed over the years. Details include:

- Three time blocks - the three different time blocks correspond to the three different block schedules that exist in each house; one for each team.
- Academic teachers have common planning time.
- The team of teachers has control over this time assigned for academic classes and can be flexible in its use. For example, if a speaker or program requires more than one period, the team can use consecutive periods.
- The team is given the responsibility of placing the students on their team in academic subjects. They can move the students as needed and have the opportunity to rotate classes under certain conditions.

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School
ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The Robert M. Finley Middle School runs on an eight-period day. During this eight-period schedule, some students can literally take nine classes and still have a lunch period. The day starts at the zero hour with students attending band, chorus, or a foreign language. School actually starts at 8:15 with a 15-minute homeroom period. Those students who attend "zero hour" classes remain in their classes during homeroom and have their attendance taken there.

All students follow the regular bell schedule during periods 1, 2, and 3. (The 8th grade during this time holds classes in reading, mathematics, social studies, science, and English.) During fourth period, the 8th grade students go to either gym, computers, or unified arts class. Unified arts classes start at 10:45 and run until 11:25. However, those students who must attend a foreign language class get out of unified arts eight minutes earlier in order to eat their lunch. These students remain in lunch until 11:37, at which time they report to their foreign language class. The rest of the students follow the normal class schedule. The foreign language students remain in class until 12:19. At this time, they rejoin their classmates in their 6th period class, either gym, computer, or unified arts, nine minutes into sixth period. The students all follow the regular school schedule for periods 7 and 8.

A typical day's schedule may look like the following:

ZERO HOUR	7:45 - 8:30	
HOMEROOM	8:15 - 8:30	
Period 1	8:33 - 9:14	
Period 2	9:17 - 9:58	
Period 3	10:01 - 10:42	
Period 4	10:45 - 11:25	11:17 - 11:37 Lunch
Period 5	11:27 - 12:07	11:38 - 12:18 Foreign Language
Period 6	12:10 - 12:50	
Period 7	12:53 - 1:33	
Period 8	1:35 - 2:15	

The schedule allows for nine periods of instruction and lunch during an eight-period day. This schedule is only possible with the cooperation of the staff and administration. Lengthening the day could only be done on a contractual basis, so the alternative was to find time during the present schedule.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Guilderland Central School District
SCHOOL: Farnsworth Middle School
ADDRESS: State Farm Road
Guilderland, NY 12084
TELEPHONE: (518) 456-6010
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1312
CONTACT: Joseph E. Purcell, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

At this school, academic teachers (grade 5 - self-contained, grade 6 - two-person teams, grades 7 & 8 - four-person teams) are given a group of students and a block of time. They schedule the time for each class within that block. The team schedule can vary to the degree teachers elect to vary it. Many teams rotate the times of classes. Many vary the length of classes within each discipline based upon what is happening in other disciplines. Practically all have some interdisciplinary projects during the year. There are not bells or official time for ending classes. In this model, there is practically unlimited flexibility for teachers to vary the schedule to meet instructional needs. It

is an example of model where teachers can work cooperatively to determine the most appropriate schedules.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The master schedule of the school is created "by hand." During this process, each team is given at least one time block where two or more periods of academics are scheduled in a row. This allows the teams to offer large-group instruction to 25-100 students depending upon the need, to plan a lesson for a group of 25 that lasts longer than one module, and to regroup in any fashion the team deems necessary. In addition, since the 6th grade English and reading programs are individualized, these areas are scheduled back to back at the same time. This facilitates team teaching with the two English teachers and with the two reading teachers, as well as among the entire group. Another feature of the schedule is the reversal of the order of modules each week. One week the schedule runs from 1 to 8 and the next from 8 to 1. In addition, if any team or teacher needs a particular order of modules to offer a lesson or interdisciplinary project, the schedule order is rearranged to facilitate the teaching strategy. Finally, whenever an assembly is scheduled, one of three approaches is used: the entire time schedule for the day is altered to make room for the assembly, and this results in somewhat shortened classes; a "barbell" schedule is employed where the day begins with a Sustained Silent Reading time and ends with the short assembly, and all classes are held but in shortened format, or a module is eliminated on a rotating basis.

By utilizing the schedule, each team is free to plan innovative and unique experiences for its students. Staff recognize that the schedule can accommodate approaches within a discipline or across disciplines that can range in length from two modules to a maximum of six. In addition, the schedule can be altered to offer instruction to a class or a team. Both ideas can maximize the time on task and can also make a lesson more easily assimilated by the students rather than having it spread across several days.

Because loss of instructional time is a concern of educators, the approach to scheduling assemblies has lessened the impact of intrusions into class time due to assemblies and schoolwide activities. Since each staff member accepts the philosophy of the scheduling, support and ownership in all we do is enhanced. Finally, by varying the times each week during which students are seen, all students have the opportunity to participate in their classes both in the morning and in the afternoon; this avoids the pitfalls for staff and students that commonly occur when flexibility of scheduling is limited.

Finally, since most schedule changes in the order of modules are initated by staff through their team leaders, sharing of different learning strategies is a positive offshoot of the approach. Everyone knows why schedules are changed, and all realize that flexibility is essential since at some time they may request a change to accomplish their learning objectives. This has been a powerful motivator for trying new tactics to teach concepts, and the staff has quietly been a source of ideas and role models for each other.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Hicksville School District #17
SCHOOL: Hicksville Middle School
ADDRESS: Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801
TELEPHONE: (516) 933-6521
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 679
CONTACT: Joseph Giambalvo, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

In the past, the four team teachers (English, social studies, mathematics, and science) have been scheduled throughout the day so that each period (except the team meeting period) one or more classes would meet. A new pilot team containing a fifth teacher (foreign language) has been established. All five team teachers teach the same five periods so that all students are scheduled for three team subjects in the morning and two in the afternoon. Team teachers work out arrangements for special programs within these periods and can easily shift students without interfering with the rest of the student's schedule. Students are scheduled for physical education, health, art, music, lunch, etc., during the remaining four periods.

This approach solved the problems of providing flexible periods of instruction without interfering with the classes that did not require a time allotment change. Since all of the students on a team are with a team teacher for the same two time blocks (periods 1, 2, 3, and periods 7, 8), the team teachers are easily

able to regroup and reorganize at will. Previous attempts at doing this met with complaints from other teachers whose classes were being partially or entirely missed. This schedule now enables the team to schedule a guest speaker, film, special presentation, etc., that will not have to fit into a 40-minute slot. It also affords the team opportunities to regroup for instruction when required.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Robert Smith, Building Curriculum Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The Lewiston-Porter Middle School master schedule accommodates over 600 students in grades 6, 7 and 8, including three option classes. Teachers utilize a formal process to develop heterogeneously grouped team rosters. Each grade level is divided into two academic teams, and each team consists of an English teacher, a science teacher, a social studies teacher, and a mathematics teacher. In addition, exploratory and special education teachers form separate teams. All teachers are provided a 42-minute personal planning period and a 42-minute common team planning period each day. Grade-level academic teachers are provided common team planning time in order to allow both teams to meet together as a grade level whenever the need occurs. Through mutual agreement, instructional teams may adjust scheduled time blocks as needed to accommodate student and/or program needs. No study halls are scheduled. Instead, available time is used to provide for a staff-developed "Enrichment" program, which meets needs ranging from remediation to gifted and talented instruction. The master schedule provides for acceleration in French, Spanish, Sequential Math I, Earth Science, and Studio in Art. Each section of Regents Earth Science is taught using only one additional instructional period each day. Selected students are heterogeneously mixed into a regular 8th grade earth science class and are homogeneously grouped for a second period for accelerated instruction and laboratory work. Regents exam grade averages are always in the '90s. The Middle School Learning Skills Center is available for student use throughout the day. Also, after-school study hall in the Learning Skills Center may be assigned as needed.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lynbrook Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Lynbrook North Middle School
ADDRESS: 529 Merrick Road
Lynbrook, NY 11563
TELEPHONE: (516) 593-2110
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 210
CONTACT: Donald J. Slover, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

Promising Programs

North Middle School has built into the schedule of each 6th, 7th and 8th grade student a large-group instruction period (LGI). This program is scheduled for each grade during the same period of the day, five days per week.

The program is designed to give both the student and the grade-level teacher unique opportunities. From the teacher standpoint, the LGI program allows the teacher to meet with the entire class at one time. During this time, the teacher can present information to the group that augments classroom learning. For example, the mathematics teacher might present information to students about important life experiences that are not contained in the state curriculum. In the past, the program has taught students how to write checks, balance checkbooks, calculate wages on a regular and overtime basis, and solve mathematical puzzles. The English teacher has conducted extemporaneous speeches, discussed literature, and conducted oral spelling and vocabulary contests. At times, the LGI period is utilized for audiovisual purposes, thus allowing classroom time for necessary follow-up activities. The LGI period permits flexible assignments for an entire grade. As part of the 8th grade home and careers program, guest speakers present career information on their chosen field. A local writer has spoken to the entire class in one period, and a local police officer has instructed the class on drug and alcohol problems they will face. The Long Island Lighting Company has visually educated a class on the dangers inherent in electricity, and a program has been presented designed to prevent cruelty to animals. The LGI program permits each grade to be divided into small groups for additional classroom activities. During the course of the school year, each group receives instruction in computer literacy. At the 6th and 7th grade levels, Logo Writer is utilized. One 6th grade assignment integrated computer literacy with the English and social studies curriculum. Each small group utilizes the school library and is educated on its use as a research tool. The 6th grade participates in small groups in the

Philosophy for Children program during the large-group instruction period, and twice a week 8th grade Regents earth science students receive laboratory instruction. Each year the 8th grade of Lynbrook North travels to Frost Valley for three days of outdoor environmental education. In order to ensure that our students are properly prepared for this experience, the LGI period is used for 10 weeks prior to the trip to instruct students on what is expected of them.

Each passing year, middle schools are being asked to increase student learning opportunities by both local and state administrations. At the same time, traditional education programs are being expanded. The LGI program allows time for quality elective instruction without reducing classroom time. Computer literacy, library research, Philosophy for Children, and career speaker programs have been added to our course offerings without infringing on previous classroom minutes. The LGI program allows North Middle School to meet Regents Action Plan requirements and at the same time increases the variety and quality of the education students receive.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 10 years

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DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 485
CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The master schedule is developed in-house every year. Attempts are made to: preserve team meeting time, provide large instructional blocks of time to academic teams to promote team autonomy with regard to varying schedules, allow for student exploratory experiences, maintain reading/literature as a required course for seventh- and eighth-graders, and provide for both band and chorus rehearsals within the school day.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Scarsdale Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Scarsdale Junior High School
ADDRESS: Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
TELEPHONE: (914) 472-3478
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 840
CONTACT: Peter Telfer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

The schedule at Scarsdale Junior High School can be used as a traditional schedule with seven periods a day plus lunch, or the team can make adjustments. Each team has four academic periods in common. They usually rotate their daily schedule so a student does not have the same class, the same period every day. In addition, the entire school's schedule is rotated every trimester. For example, seventh-graders have special subject area classes first and second periods the first trimester; third and fourth periods the second trimester; and, seventh and eighth periods the third trimester. The academic periods also change. The only way to have a truly flexible schedule is to allow decisions to be made at the teacher level. The teachers freely and frequently reconfigure their team schedules as the needs of individual team members and/or curriculum demands are met.

The flexible use of time is a must for any good middle school program. Teachers must be able to make changes within assigned blocks of time or designated periods. The rotation of the entire schedule avoids some teachers having the "good" schedule all year, while others have the "bad" schedule all year. This way there are three different rotations and everyone shares them.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Troy City School District
SCHOOL: W. K. Doyle Middle School
ADDRESS: 1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
TELEPHONE: (518) 271-5352
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 782
CONTACT: James M. Gorman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: f

Each team has at least one period when the entire team is in session; some have as many as three. The teams also have the ability to alter their entire day to address needs such as special activities, field trips, interdisciplinary instruction, etc. In addition, each team must perform one interdisciplinary activity. In fact, most teams involve themselves in multiple interdisciplinary projects during the year.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

Area g

Involving Parents and Community in the Education of Middle-Level Students

Schools are aware of the importance of parents and the community in the education of young adolescents and are seeking alternative approaches to promoting home-school and community-school connections that support education at the middle level. Several examples and models of such approaches are presented in this section.

Area g: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District
  Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Middle School
- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Nyack Central School District
  Nyack Junior High School
- Troy City School District
  W. K. Doyle Middle School
- Valley Stream Central High School
  Valley Stream North High School
- Yonkers City Schools
  Hawthorne Junior High School
- Yonkers City Schools
  Mark Twain Junior High School

DISTRICT: Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District
SCHOOL: Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Middle School
ADDRESS: County Route 22
Parish, NY 13131
TELEPHONE: (315) 625-7850
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 386
CONTACT: Penelope Carson, Counselor
Stanley Finkle, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Middle School addresses the involvement of parents and community in the education of middle-level students in a unique, three-pronged project for the prevention of substance abuse. The school is working with two community agencies: Farnham Incorporated in Oswego and the Oswego County Sheriff's Department. Also, our staff are being trained to use Lions-Quest materials with students. These three programs are coordinated by the principal and guidance counselor. Two Farnham counselors are part of this project. One counselor visits the school weekly and, on a one-to-one basis, works at all grade levels with students who are already using and abusing drugs. Her purposes are: 1) to help the student build enough self-confidence and self-esteem to be able to begin to cope with stressful adolescent problems without the use of drugs; and 2) to educate young abusers on the physical and psychological effects of drug use. The second Farnham counselor is piloting a drug prevention program especially focused on young people "at risk" for drug use: students with alcohol or substance use in the home, dysfunctional families, and/or continued failure in either academic or social development. This prevention program uses individual and teacher-coordinated small-group processes.

The second part of APW Middle School's project involves a community agency, the Oswego County Sheriff's Department. In six-week increments, uniformed policemen are in the building working on Project Dare with small groups of 6th graders. The officers communicate to students that they are a helping and caring agency as well as an enforcement one. They also serve as nonthreatening role models. The third program, Lions-Quest, also involves parents and community. Lions-Quest is used by teachers all year on all three grade levels. Its purpose is to develop self-esteem, responsibility, and refusal skills. Each student has his or her own workbook, which has sections for family sharing as part of the assignments. These sections are designed to encourage dialogues between the young people and their parents. Questions and activities are open-ended rather than judgmental. The materials are designed to be integrated with regular school curriculums. APW is utilizing the Lions-Quest in 6th grade science, 7th grade social studies and 8th grade health. In addition to the integrated program described above, as a part of regular classes, the 8th grade health teacher has members of the community speak to students. Also, the APW district newsletter to all parents includes question-and-answer articles on helping children say no to drugs and listening skills for parents.

APW is excited and optimistic about the above multifaceted plans to respond to the needs of the students for guidance and encouragement in making positive life decisions. The plan, affecting all three grade levels simultaneously with visual, affective, and academic appeal, is a singular and effective approach to the problem of substance abuse - the problem now acknowledged as paramount on local, state, and national levels. All students desire and need direction and regulation. The school's utilization of community agencies and programs involving parents help in the provision of direction and regulation that the student can use in every part of his or her environment. The adoption of a comprehensive project reflects the importance of the school in assisting the student in the transition from childhood to adolescence. The programs actually show students how to develop self-esteem, personal identity and efficacy, and a sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Students are being equipped with personal/social skills and attitudes that will enable them to succeed not only during a crucial transition period but throughout life.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAVE BEEN IN PLACE: Farnham - 2 years — Dare & Lions Quest - 1 year

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DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g .

Bronxville Middle School prides itself on a true collaborative effort among teachers, parents, and students. There are monthly meetings open to all parents where school personnel discuss aspects of the program and are responsive to concerns. In addition, the student government is designed on the town meeting format. Parents, teachers, and students commonly plan activities and programs in the school.

Staff seize every opportunity to showcase the efforts of students through the local newspaper and visits to civic associations, hospitals, and nursing homes.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3

SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

Parents and community members saw a need for more middle school choice in the district. Columbus Academy was established to meet this need. Each prospective parent must visit the school prior to applying to help understand the program and school's philosophy. There is an active Parent Advisory Council with several committees: Fund Raising, 8th Grade Parents Committee, Social, and School Board Watch Committee. Progress reports are sent home six times a year - one in the middle and one at the end of each trimester. There are four parent-student-teacher conference times, bimonthly parent meetings, and several social events a year. A monthly bulletin is published to inform parents of school events and meetings. Also included are policy statements on homework, attendance, etc.

Community service is an integral part at Project Find Hamilton House, a nearby senior citizens center. Student interns are sent to a local veterinary practice.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School
ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

The Robert M. Finley Middle School has developed a committee made up of administrators, teachers, students, and parents who will work on goals for the school. The school also emphasizes a great amount of contact between parents and teachers. Teachers are encouraged to call parents when their students are doing well and when the students need improvement. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the day as well as at night so that all parents have the opportunity to attend.

In some cases, schools are taking over areas of parenting that were originally established in the home. Good teacher/parent relations allow parents and teachers to work together in deciding what is best for the child/student. If everyone is involved and working to develop the best possible environment for the student, it can only be to the student's advantage.

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: O r Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

The school has an active partnership with its Parent-Teacher Organization. Throughout the year, there are a number of events where parents work with the school or in the classroom:

- As a joint effort, an annual fund raiser is conducted. The administration and secretarial staff assist in the organization of the event, but the parents work in the school collecting and accounting for money, awarding prizes, and handling problems. All of the funds obtained are returned directly to the school to fund projects, subsidize trips, bring in performing groups, and finance student recognition activities.
- Parents are responsible for organizing cultural enrichment performances for the school. Each year 4-6 events are scheduled after the parents investigate the organizations and programs. They are offered for the entire school or a grade level. The teaching staff utilizes advance information in the classroom to prepare the students.
- An important part of the program is educating students in the area of social and interpersonal development. Four or five times a year, the school is opened on a Friday evening for canteens. The parents in charge of the program meet with administrators to plan the evening and develop responsibilities for parents. Staffed entirely by parents, the canteen sponsors sports, board games, music, conversation, and refreshments.
- The PTO also serves as a resource base for providing speakers for the classroom teachers and teams.

Another program which pairs Chapter I writing students with residents from a local nursing home. Through the activities, students are made of the problems of senior citizens. The activities include: clustering and writing vignettes and monologues;

filling out interest inventories and writing pen pal request letters; exchanging friendly letters with pen pals; creating an original pen pal gift by working with the school's Unified Arts teachers; attending a pen pal party at the nursing home where the gift is presented and the students meet the pen pal in person for the first time; providing entertainment at the nursing home through speeches, reading of personal writing, or demonstrating unusual talents; writing thank you notes and newspaper stories pertaining to the project; and developing a social relationship with an individual from a different generation.

Through the cooperation that exists between the parent/community and the school, programs geared to the nature of the early adolescents are offered. Utilizing this partnership gives parents an ownership into the school and enables them to develop camaraderie that would otherwise be absent. A social network is also established among parents, students, and school. In addition, the involvement of parents in these four areas educates them about the characteristics and needs of the early adolescent, and thus, they become valuable allies when discussing with the community concerns about this school. This modeling is reflected by the student interest in, appreciation of and pride in the activities conducted by the parents.

This program has recently received an award from the Westchester County Office of the Aging. Here students strive for academic excellence in their writing program as they utilize the district writing process. These students are often "at-risk" academically, and because of their lack of achievement in writing, their self-esteem is often low. The program seeks to improve their communication and writing skills and thus raise the level of self-esteem. Because the students have an audience for their writing and speaking, the use of specific skills becomes more meaningful. Thus a positive attitude toward learning and writing is fostered.

Students also interact with the senior citizens in a social setting, and this broadens their experience base. These adults provide positive role models, and the students develop an understanding and compassion relative to their needs while also participating in a community service.

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DISTRICT: Hicksville School District #17
SCHOOL: Hicksville Middle School
ADDRESS: Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801
TELEPHONE: (516) 933-6521
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 679
CONTACT: Gerald Klein, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

In order to affirm the importance of school and home connections and school and community connections in the education of middle-level students, a program to encourage educational partnerships was established in Hicksville at the very outset of the process to change the traditional junior high to a true middle school.

In 1984, a secondary study committee was convened. Membership was extended to administrators, teachers, parents, and representatives of community agencies and organizations. A major goal of the committee was to discuss the educational program most appropriate to the needs of early adolescents and to restructure the junior high school in order to accommodate the implementation of a program based on a new philosophy of middle-level education. As part of the study, members of the committee, including parents and community leaders, held extensive interviews with students in order to determine their views with respect to moving the 9th grade to the high school and adopting a new mission with respect to grades 7 and 8. Observer teams, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders also visited middle schools in order to speak with staff members and children in an effort to identify quality programs and procedures that could be adopted to meet the needs of Hicksville's middle-level population.

In order to further promote parent and community involvement in the project to create a middle school, meetings with parents and others were held in the evenings at three locations within the district, thus affording working parents an opportunity to express their views with respect to the proposed change. In addition, a public forum was held with school board members, to which the general public was invited. Many of the suggestions of those in attendance were incorporated in developing the plan for restructuring.

During the 1986/1987 school year, an extensive project was launched to fully prepare parents and community leaders, as well as teachers and students, for the changes that were to be implemented.

As part of this awareness process, groups of administrators, teachers, and parents attended conferences and workshops dealing with middle-level education. Thus, the process was not limited to members of the professional staff. Furthermore, special meetings were held at school in order to make all parents aware of the specific changes that were to occur as part of restructuring and to provide opportunities for their input.

In January 1987, a special orientation program was held for parents of sixth-graders who were to enter the middle school in September. The mission and philosophy of the middle school were discussed, and parents were afforded an opportunity to ask questions and express their concerns. In order to immediately establish an active partnership, teachers who were to be "team" members were present to meet the parents and inform them of plans they were making for the first year of the middle school.

During the first two years of operation, relationships among

teachers and parents have been significantly strengthened. The scheduling of a common team planning period has enabled parents to meet with full "teams" of teachers, thereby gaining a much broader view of their child's progress and development in school. Accordingly, parent perceptions of the middle school program are most positive, and their views are communicated to their children. It is safe to say that children at Hicksville Middle School recognize the partnership that exists between their school and home.

Through a variety of activities, parents and community leaders have become increasingly involved in middle school affairs. In addition to linking parents to the school, a number of steps have been taken to promote a strong school-community partnership. The Hicksville Youth Council has effectively coordinated many of their projects (e.g., field trips, part-time employment service, counselors) with school activities and programs. The Council has provided speakers on drug and alcohol abuse for health classes. Social workers have established contacts with at-risk children to supplement school efforts to aid these youngsters. The Gregory Museum, a local agency, has worked with middle school teachers to enrich the curriculum by scheduling visits that provide personalized learning experiences. In addition, the museum has created opportunities for Hicksville youngsters to grow as aware citizens by sponsoring historical essay contests and visitations to Town Hall meetings.

In 1988, a school improvement committee (MAC - Melius/Altius/Citius) was organized to develop a plan that would constantly move the school closer to realizing the major objectives of middle-level education. The committee is comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, and representatives of community agencies.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Mary Ellen Tower, 6th Grade Teacher
Susan Capell, Librarian
Dennis Tosetto, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

The Lewiston-Porter Middle School Building Planning Team is composed of seven paid Teacher Leaders, other representative teachers, and five parent members. The Building Planning Team utilizes a networking system that provides two-way communication for use by the school staff and parents to present needs and concerns as well as responses. The members of the Building Planning Team set objectives based upon articulated needs, then establish a planned methodology involving appropriate staff and parents who will bring about changes that respond to the identified need.

The orientation program consists of five distinct components. In April, the parents of all fifth-grade students are invited to attend an orientation program in the middle school that introduces the parents to the middle school concept and related procedures. In May, all entering fifth-grade students tour the middle school and meet in small groups with the principal and selected staff members to learn about the school's programs, activities, and expectations. In August, all parents of students new to both the school district and the middle school are provided an orientation program. Selected students assist with the above orientations. During the first three days of school, team teachers provide a planned orientation program to assigned students. This includes tours of the school for sixth-grade students. Team teachers representing all three grade levels divide responsibility for discussing team and school processes and procedures. Classroom teachers discuss classroom expectations during this orientation period. Overall, students are provided considerable information regarding grading, assignment notebooks, discipline, schedules, special programs, and numerous other topics that are needed to function successfully in the school. In September, all parents of middle school students are invited to an evening program where they meet with their child's academic team teachers and exploratory teachers. Parents are provided an opportunity to visit classrooms and speak individually with staff members at the end of the planned program. Refreshments for the September program are provided by the school and PTA. In late December, the orientation process continues with a Holiday Tour. The school is well decorated and students set up displays and activities that demonstrate learning that is taking place in the middle school. Through this process, parents become familiar with the school program through the eyes of their children.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5-6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

The middle school tries to involve the community. There is a volunteer program headed by a parent who surveys the staff for their needs. An attempt is then made to match volunteers to assist in the classrooms and with various activities. There is a parent task force that was very involved with the Middle School Committee in planning an evening presentation to the community where Dr. James Garvin was the speaker. Parents and community were invited to see displays and videotapes in the building, had a dessert and coffee hour and then listened to the presentation, which oriented them to the behavior and characteristics of preadolescents.

There is a home/community ... committee, which is working to carry out an action plan. The committee is working on ways to inform parents about specific curricula in the middle school, forming various parent groups to be involved in instructional support and extracurricular activities, and exploring ways to communicate school rules to parents. Other activities that involve the community are Open House, performance evenings, art shows, and concerts.

The middle school has also moved to computerized grade reports every five weeks to keep the parents better informed. Parents are also invited to attend team meetings to discuss the progress of their children.

In 1989, the school has been totally involved in a 50th-year building celebration.

During career day, volunteers and guest speakers are brought into the school. They serve on panels with persons of related professions, where they present information and answer questions. The students are first surveyed to find where their interests lie. After the panels are set up, the students then have a choice of which panels they would like to hear. Afterwards there is a social held in the cafeteria for all involved with the day.

Club Day is another attempt to meet the needs of student interest. Every other Wednesday, each period is shortened by four minutes to create an extra period at the end of the day for clubs to meet. Some examples of clubs are Math, Student Council, Ping Pong, Horizons, Drama, Computer, Video, Students Take Action, Library, Art, Baseball Cards, Ski, Chess, Juniors & Seniors, Students Against Drunk Driving, and Domino Club.

In June there is also quite a lengthy assembly program that honors all scholastic and club participants and achievements. Students from all areas and classes are recognized.

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DISTRICT: Nyack Central School District
SCHOOL: Nyack Junior High School
ADDRESS: South Highland Avenue
Nyack, NY 10960

TELEPHONE: (914) 353-0503
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 395
CONTACT: J. Thomas Kane, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

Most school programs that are designed for parental consumption are one-shot experiences, frequently without a context. That is not the case in Nyack Junior High School. Within the context of understanding early adolescents, Nyack Junior High School has established the Parents Institute on Early Adolescence. The program of the Institute covers the following topics over a two-year period:

Year One:

Understanding Early Adolescence: An Overview
Living with 10-to-15-Year-Olds
Talking About Sex
Risk-Taking Behavior
Substance Abuse Update
The Single Parent Family and Early Adolescence
Early Adolescent Community Resources

Year Two:

Understanding Early Adolescence: An Overview
Setting Limits for Early Adolescents
The Contemporary Family and Early Adolescents
Teenage Suicide
"Kids on Kids" and Early Adolescent Community Resources

Woven through all these workshops are the basic concepts and dynamics of early adolescent development. The concepts and dynamics are reinforced as the year progresses. A parent attending the Institute does not feel singled out because he or she is going to a session on drugs or suicide. Rather, all topics are part of ongoing themes within the Institute. After a week, following each Institute presentation, school counselors offer follow-up discussion sessions to explore concepts and ideas in depth. Parents who can adopt some sound management strategies stand a better chance of establishing real communications links with their youngsters and within the family circle. A school community that establishes a Parents' Institute, tailored to local grade levels and the needs of parents and youngsters, again becomes a therapeutic community.

This program has received national attention, having been presented at the National Middle School Conference in Atlanta in 1986 and at the NASSP Conference in New Orleans in 1989. The concept has been detailed in an article "The Middle School as a Therapeutic Community," NYS Middle School Association Journal, *In Transition*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring 1989, pp. 10-12.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Troy City School District
SCHOOL: W. K. Doyle Middle School
ADDRESS: 1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
TELEPHONE: (518) 271-5352
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 782
CONTACT: James M. Gorman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

Each team has its own parent advisory committee that meets during team preparation time on a monthly basis. These parents become actively involved in the total team process and act as a tremendous resource in gathering information.

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DISTRICT: Valley Stream Central High School
SCHOOL: Valley Stream North High School
ADDRESS: 750 Herman Avenue
Franklin Square, NY 11010
TELEPHONE: (516) 561-7903
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 690
CONTACT: Robert Alden, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

The Four Years and Beyond program was created for the parents of all 8th grade students and was conducted by the administrative team at the building level. It consisted of a series of meetings with the parents during October and November, which were held during the day and evening. Approximately 75% of the parents attended. The program included an overview of the curriculum that each student would go through during the next four years. It also included the scheduling process, the various testing that would be done with each student, a review of the Student Rights and Responsibilities pamphlet, an overview of the possible career choices and further education opportunities that would be available, as well as a review of the extracurricular program. A strong emphasis was also placed on each student taking the most rigorous program possible.

In addition to providing parents with the information necessary to enable them to assist their children to achieve a successful high school experience, the Four Years and Beyond program provides an opportunity for a dialogue between parents and administrators. Due to the small-group nature of these meetings—between 12 and 30 parents—a comfortable and open atmosphere allows for the exchange of ideas and opinions. It also provides parents an opportunity to ask questions and, as a result, a good deal of misinformation has been clarified.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: Hawthorne Junior High School
ADDRESS: Hawthorne Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
TELEPHONE: (914) 963-4567
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 412
CONTACT: Michael Yazurlo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

Hawthorne Junior High School's Skills Reinforcement Project, in affiliation with John Hopkins University, is a model program that addresses the needs of disadvantaged potentially gifted and identified gifted students through an extension of the school year at at residential college site and the extension of the school week, using research-based curriculum and processes developed at Johns Hopkins University. This model program serves these students through a magnet school involving parental choice. Teachers are trained to allow for articulation between the extended summer and weekend program and the magnet school program. Parents are trained so that they can better aid their children to help insure success. This program interfaces with the university support collaboration s for promising disadvantaged youth. The program provides a consistent well-developed curriculum and process for these collaborative programs.

As a result of this program, there is an increase in the identification of gifted and talented students who might not be identified through traditional assessment methods and disadvantaged gifted students already in gifted programs perform at a rate more commensurate with their ability level and with other gifted students. This program is also designed to improve the collaboration between the public schools and universitites in the service of gifted disadvantaged students.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: Mark Twain Junior High School
ADDRESS: Woodlawn Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10704
TELEPHONE: (914) 963-4567
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 753

CONTACT: Roey Ficaro, Student Assistant Counselor (drug/alcohol)
Ellen Devlin, Teacher (EPIC)

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: g

EPIC (Effective Parenting Information for Children) is a non-profit organization that provides a school and parent education program. EPIC Parent Workshops are a series of six, two-hour sessions, held for six consecutive weeks, that provide parents with a forum for discussion and support while increasing parenting skills. Two trained parent volunteers facilitate each group. Parents choose six topics from the following list:

- Keeping in Touch with Parenting
- Growing Up Is Hard Work
- Communication Problems and Strategies
- Teen Values System
- Love That Is Patient, Love That Is True
- High School: Parents Can Help
- Who Am I? Identity and Independence
- Making, Breaking, and Revising Rules
- Self-Destruction
- Peer Groups
- Emerging Sexuality
- Teen Pregnancy.

Workshops are held at host schools and/or other community centers. Working with the Mark Twain PTA, parents were trained to be facilitators and conducted the workshops themselves with a teacher representative. They met during the evening at the school. Mark Twain has joined 17 other Westchester County junior/middle schools and 37 high schools implementing a Student Assistance Program. This program is funded by the New York State Division of Substance Abuse, the State Education Department, and the school district, as well as corporate and private donations. The Student Assistance Program provides alcohol and other drug-prevention activities and counseling services to students. The program's goals are as follows:

- To prevent the development of alcohol and drug abuse among students
- To reduce the incidence of alcohol and drug-related problems among students
- To improve attendance and to reduce alcohol and other drug consumption among students with drug-and alcohol-related problems.

A counselor has been selected to serve as the Student Assistance Counselor at Mark Twain. The counselor has a master's degree in social work and previous experience in working with adolescents, as well as specialized training in the substance-abuse field. The counselor is being paid and supervised by Student Assistance Services and the school. The counselor is also available to see students who are using alcohol or drugs or who have personal, school, or family problems that would lead to substance abuse or suicide.

The program is also organized so that small groups of students are scheduled to meet with the counselor for an orientation regarding substance abuse and the counselor's role in the school. Confidentiality is an important and necessary part of the program.

While it is not alway easy to get parents involved, those who did attend were very enthusiatic and appreciative for having the opportunity to meet and discuss common concerns. This program helped them to help themselves and their children—an important step towards the development of home-based guidance.

In addition to the natural changes taking place among adolescents, societal pressures have a profound effect on them. Support from the community is essential, especially for the "at-risk" students. This program teaches, as well as counsels, students and provides them with a mentor they feel they can confide in and trust. It has been very beneficial to a number of students.

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Classroom Instruction

Area h: Involving students in their own learning
Area i: Using a variety of teaching strategies to match instruction to the varied learning styles of students
Area j: Developing interdisciplinary programs
Area k: Instituting cooperative learning and/or peer tutoring opportunities for students
Area l: Planning and implementing exploratory experiences for middle-level students
Area m: Developing in students a feeling of personal efficacy and a sense of responsibility for themselves and others
Area n: Identifying desired student outcomes for the middle-level grades and appropriate assessment techniques

Area h

Involving Students in Their Own Learning

Teachers in the middle grades are seeking creative ways to involve students in their own learning and to increase the active participation of students in the classroom. This section describes several examples and models that professionals in middle-level schools have used to engage students in their education and to increase classroom participation.

Area h: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #3
  The Center School
- Community School District #27
  Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
- East Islip Union Free School District
  East Islip High School
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Hartford Central School District
  Hartford Central School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Northport-East Northport Union Free School District
  Middleville Road Middle School
- Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District
  James H. Vernon Middle School
- Yonkers City Schools
  Mark Twain Junior High School

DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

Cooperative learning has been a mainstay in the educational program. The teachers have used this technique to stimulate students' participation and responsibility in the academic process.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: The Center School
ADDRESS: 270 West 70th Street
New York, NY 10023
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2929
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 165
CONTACT: Elaine Schwartz, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The goal of the Center School and the overall philosophy are that children be responsible for their education. In keeping with this, the Center School has the children report on their progress in classes. This is not to be confused with a class evaluation, since this is to judge the child's performance in the class.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
ADDRESS: 320 Beach 104 Street
Rockaway Beach, NY 11694
TELEPHONE: (718) 945-2700
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,000
CONTACT: Ilana Block, Scholar Research Institute

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The *Scholar Research Institute* at JHS 180Q centers on using research experiences to integrate curriculum areas and to promote independent study. Students in our program are actively involved in their education. Each time a student is introduced to a new research skill or technique (i.e., data collection, interviewing, scientific observation), he or she must take that skill out of the classroom into larger arenas of the school, the community, and the world. The use of "mini-projects" engages our SRI students in decision making and independent selection at many junctures in the learning process. Students are frequently encouraged to evaluate their learning experiences and to analyze their preferences and interests. With teacher and peer guidance, students are able to focus on the area(s) that they would like to pursue in greater depth.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: East Islip Union Free School District
SCHOOL: East Islip High School
ADDRESS: Redman Street
Islip Terrace, NY 11752
TELEPHONE: (516) 581-1600
GRADE SPAN: 9-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 1304
7-8 628
CONTACT: Barry Goodman

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The program, *Moving Up - Transition from 6th Grade to Junior High School*, consists of a series of skits/vignettes demonstrated by students on youth concerns and getting through the first few days in the junior high school.

Scenes: What to Wear
Getting Up Early
The Bus Stop/Walking
Arrival at School
Where to Sit
Bathroom/Lunchroom
In-School Suspension/The Dean
Cliques/Crisis Facilitator
After-School Activities

The program also includes a question/answer session — followed up by a visit to the junior high. This program allows the young people a chance to vent their feelings and fears as well as listen to other young people who have recently made the transition.

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School

ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The Robert M. Finley Middle School has two programs that allow students to be creative and responsible for their own learning. The first of these is the Computer-Assisted Instruction program. This program is designed to allow students to enhance their learning in the areas of reading comprehension, math and/or algebra, Language arts, informative writing using Wordsworth and spelling. Students choose the program they wish to work on along with input from their subject teachers and the lab manager. In this manner, students receive extra help on their computers in areas where they may be experiencing deficits. The other program is a summer reading program. Students are encouraged to read over the summer from a list of books developed by their teachers or from material they find on their own. When they are done reading a book, they drop off a Summer Reading Card in the main office of the middle school. Parents are asked to help by monitoring their child's progress. Teachers are encouraged to support the program and to give credit for the books that are read when it is appropriate.

What students learn on their own they will remember, and when students feel that they have accomplished something well they will develop pride in their work. Using the computer assisted program and the summer reading program, students have helped themselves to achieve better grades in more creative ways. Students choose the subject area that they wish to work on and then spend time developing skills in that area.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Hartford Central School District
SCHOOL: Hartford Central School
ADDRESS: Hartford, NY 12838
TELEPHONE: (518) 632-5923
GRADE SPAN: Pre K-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 540
CONTACT: Frank J. Barone, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

Psychologists cite four sources for self-esteem:

Power Ability to influence circumstances of life.

Connectedness Feeling of satisfaction that arises from acceptance, attention, and affection of others.

Standards Role models and reference points that help us establish meaningful values and goals.

Uniqueness Special sense of self that comes from acknowledging qualities that make us special and different.

The Hartford Middle School Health Program attends to the esteem needs of the students by specifically addressing these sources through structured classroom activities. The *content* of the activities provides valuable health information. The *process* of the activities enhances the feelings of power, connectedness, standards, and uniqueness for which every student strives.

Activity 1: Developing a curriculum from student concerns.

A. Students brainstorm list of possible topics.

B. Using criteria, students rank topics.

C. Students develop a question census for each topic.

D. Students develop a list of activities to address the questions raised.

Activity 2: Contract grading based on the curriculum designed in Activity 1; students commit to performance levels for a grade. This may include reading, projects, trips, oral reports, test grade, etc.

Activities 3-5: Communications Skills--Students participate in activities that move from total nonlistening to dual communication (two TV sets on at the same time), to focusing and listening. Group explores how various communications breakdowns can lead to other things.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis Tosetto, Principal
Carl Sheusi, 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher

Jean Lumian, Physical Education Teacher
James Grapes, Physical Education Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

Each year, all middle school students complete a 140-question survey using a five-point Likert scale. The first section relates to student attitudes regarding their school in general, including such topics as how they rank their school, the cafeteria food, special programs, and student participation. The second section allows students to express their opinions regarding each specific subject in which they are enrolled. They are asked questions such as: Is grading fair? Do students behave in the classroom? Do they understand the teacher? Results are computer-scored by team teachers and individual results are discussed by the team teachers assigned to responding groups of students. Teachers assist one another in interpreting results. Only grade-level results are shared with the building principal. It has been agreed that survey results will be used as a program-enhancement tool and not as a teacher-evaluation tool. Students are very positive about participating in this activity and state that they believe their opinions are valued.

Project Adventure is a nationally recognized program that provides an interdisciplinary approach to teaching students and staff that the more we know about ourselves and our environment, including our strengths and limitations, the better we will be able to resolve daily problems. Problem-solving techniques are incorporated into lessons using a hands-on approach. Students learn to exceed their own expectations and to assist other teammates as they progress through structured, yet exciting, individual and group activities. The program functions mainly through instruction provided by the physical education teachers who have received extensive training in Project Adventure methods. The program involves interesting indoor and outdoor apparatus that has been constructed on the middle school site through student fund-raising. Students climb, swing, and balance as they learn to compete successfully against themselves through an experience-based process.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Northport-East Northport Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Middleville Road Middle School
ADDRESS: Middleville Road
Northport, NY 11768
TELEPHONE: (516) 261-9000 ext. 195
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 424
CONTACT: Peter Corradi, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The Reading is Fundamental Program (R.I.F.) has been a practice of the middle school for 10 years. The program consists of 15 minutes a day for sustained silent reading throughout the school. During this period, students and staff alike read books, magazines, newspapers, etc., in a silent setting. The intent is to set a learning environment that establishes a tone and priority for the communication through the printed word.

The program is founded on the firm conviction that reading can be a real pleasure for children if they have books of their own. The goal of a reading motivation program is to provide each child an opportunity to personally discover this new interest. The program is designed to reinforce the "reading is FUN" message. Children are actively involved in the selection process and choose from a wide variety of titles. In this way, children become active participants in their own learning and are directly involved in their education.

The practice establishes a parent/school sense of communicating. Its intent is to promote home and community/school communications that support education at the middle level. It also unifies the staff, whether they be instructional or noninstructional personnel, and places an importance and value on written communication.

The PTA is involved in supporting this program by subsidizing a portion of the cost of purchasing the books through fund-raising activities. Their support for the past 10 years has significantly contributed to sustaining and even expanding the program during lean budget years. Since Federal matching funds are available to help support the program, the more money raised locally, the more we receive from the federal government.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 10 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District
SCHOOL: James H. Vernon Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 106
East Norwich, NY 11732
TELEPHONE: (516) 922-3170
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 ENROLLMENT: 395
CONTACT: Joseph Ferraro, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

The origin of the literature/decision-making course is founded

on the belief that young adolescents' needs-psychological, physical, emotional, and social — must be addressed in order for them to succeed academically. In addition, they have a great need for a sense of community, increased autonomy, and the right to make their own decisions. The literature/decision making course for eighth-graders was created to address these concerns.

The course is structured to allow teachers to work in teams and to present the students with cooperative learning situations that involve the students in their education. Guidance counselors, English teachers, and remedial reading teachers staff the program. The units of study focus on the concept of "self," peer pressure, stereotypes, prejudices, family, decision-making skills, stress, time-management skills, and study skills. The activities permit the students to function and develop in a close, mutually respectful environment encouraging participation by all and requiring individual decision making and critical thinking. The carefully selected literature presents teenage protagonists who face conflicts with which the students can identify. The students discuss, analyze, and evaluate the works as they relate to life. In addition, the students develop reading comprehension, enhance vocabulary and an awareness of diction, and utilize structural analysis techniques that strengthen their reading skills in a most meaningful setting.

We believe that the literature/decision making course is one that meets the vision of an effective middle school curriculum as defined by such experts on middle school education as D.H. Eichhorn, David A. Hamburg, C.F. Toepfer, Jr., Nancy Atwell, and Robert Ricken.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: Mark Twain Junior High School
ADDRESS: Woodlawn Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10704
TELEPHONE: (914) 963-4567 Ext. 359
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 753
CONTACT: Ellen Devlin

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: h

In February 1989, two English teachers at Mark Twain Junior High School implemented a writing process program in an attempt to assist students in preparation for the 8th grade RCT writing test. The Nancy Atwell program, as outlined in *In The Middle: Writing, Reading and Learning with Adolescents*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1987, has been modified slightly and is co-taught by both teachers.

Student groups range in size from 15 to 30. Some groups are of mixed ability and others are homogeneous. Participating students are scheduled for three writing classes of 42 minutes each per week, and two Reading Workshop classes. In these groups of 30, the English and reading teachers coteach; in three classes of 30, each teacher teaches alone and the reading teacher teaches one group of 15 low-functioning students. Each class follows the Atwell format: a five-minute mini-lesson to teach skills of editing, writing, grammar, and usage. These are selected on the basis of observed student need for a particular skill. A 30-minute writing period follows wherein students write, confer with each other and the teacher, and revise their work. Final drafts are prepared for publication in "real" magazines students select. At the end of each period, for 5-7 minutes, the class gathers together to read from each other's work and offer constructive criticism. The teachers read from their writing, also.

Student folders include a list of teacher and student expectations; a list of topics to write about generated by the students, and a list of skills taught to that individual by the teacher. For example, if a teacher shows a student in conference how to use quotation marks, a brief notation is written in the folder for the student to refer to. In this way, an individualized skill development program is provided for each student.

In the Reading Workshop, students select full-length novels (gathered from lists of adolescents' favorites), and read for 30 minutes. They then react to the reading in a log (notebook) and their teacher responds. A written dialogue continues for the length of the workshop. The workshops are felt to be very successful from several points of view. Student motivation is high and sustained for four months. They report liking both workshops and having a real feeling of accomplishment. An objective measure of success is that PCT writing scores moved from 42 percent pass rate to a 93 percent pass rate. It should be stated here that another reading/English congruence program (PITS) was implemented at the same time and contributed greatly to this success.

Area i

Using a Variety of Teaching Strategies to Match Instruction to the Varied Learning Styles of Students

Teachers in middle-level schools are looking for alternative ways to identify the learning styles of students and for specific instructional strategies that take maximum advantage of individual learning styles. Several examples and models of alternative approaches are contained in this section.

Area i: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Auburn Enlarged City School District
  East Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Herricks Union Free School District
  Herricks Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Port Jefferson Union Free School District
  Port Jefferson Junior High School
- Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
  Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Wappingers Central School District
  Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
- William Spyropoulos
- Yonkers City Schools
  Mark Twain Junior High School

DISTRICT: Auburn Enlarged City School District
SCHOOL: East Middle School
ADDRESS: c/o Administrative Offices
78 Thornton Avenue
Auburn, NY 13021
TELEPHONE: (315) 255-5821
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 614
CONTACT: Paul DelPiano, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *i*

The Auburn Enlarged City School District has a history of fulfilling the cognitive and affective needs of students who have below-average intellectual functioning abilities but whose deficiencies do not fulfill the criteria to enable them to receive Resource Room assistance. Classes entitled "Basic Skills" were developed and established for small groups of students (8-10 students) in each of the "core" academic areas. Unfortunately, while some of the cognitive goals were attained, the affective part of the process was diminished. Realizing the above-mentioned results, the administration and staff of East Middle School embarked on a process to develop procedures for the full integration of Basic Skills students into the "core" academic subjects. The program commenced, on a limited basis, during the 1988-89 school year in selected 6th grade subjects. The 7th grade instructional staff, recognizing the need for the continuity of program for said students, have initiated the development of integrating the Basic Skills students in English, social studies, and science for the 1989-90 academic year.

Study sessions were held during the 1988-89 school year, and such sessions included the following:

- The Principal and Assistant Principal
- The Administrator of Student Services
- The Reading Specialist
- The Writing Specialist
- The Special Education Teacher
- The Director of Secondary Education
- The Supervisors of English, Science, and Social Studies Departments.

The focus of the discussion(s) was the following:

- How can we individualize instruction for these students in a 40-minute period?
- How can we reduce stigmatization the student(s) might feel when utilizing different materials in the class?
- How can we communicate our plan to both students and parents?
- How can we monitor the student modifications during the school year?

The questions above were addressed during the week of August 14-18, 1989, in a five-day workshop. The group of individuals facilitating the plan continue to meet during the 1989-90 academic year in order to plan, share information, and evaluate the progress of the program and that of the students. The ultimate goal of the program is to enable all staff members to realize that learning problems of various degrees exist throughout the student population. As the instructors share and discuss their experiences among themselves, it is anticipated the learning outcomes of *all* students will be enhanced.

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *i*

The Special Education Team at Blue Mountain Middle School was purposely reorganized in order to provide certain modules throughout the day allotted to assist students in need of extra help. Students experiencing difficulty in their classes can be given short-term academic intervention, individually or in small groups. Simultaneously, teachers can be assisted in providing a broad range of educational approaches for diverse learning styles.

Middle school is the beginning of a long process of great expectations of independence and responsibility. For many, these attributes do not come easily, and the process is slower and more rocky. Most of the students referred for support do not necessarily have any clear classifiable disabilities, but their weak organizational and study skills are impeding their success. They must learn how to plan, how to organize, how to study; in other words, they must learn HOW TO LEARN! Additionally, many students are in need of short-term reinforcement of specific concepts taught in their classrooms.

Within the support modules, varied teaching strategies are employed: small study groups are formed for test preparation; peer tutoring is initiated; teaming up an achieving student with an "at-risk" student occurs; curriculum is modified or abridged, stressing concepts through a multimodality approach; alternative approaches to studying are developed with students (e.g., visual mappings, memory techniques); supplemental materials are utilized, including study guides and model student notebooks; various organizational strategies are

used, such as daily homework sheets, notebooks, and locker organization; individualized tutoring for specific concepts is provided when necessary.

To accomplish all of the above, a procedure has been established. First, the teacher identifies the student and the difficulties encountered in class. Second, the teacher or team meets with the Support Team teacher to discuss the student and the problem, and an intake sheet is completed. Third, the student's needs, support options, and suggested methods are discussed within the Support Team, and a plan is formulated. Next, the plan is confirmed where all who are involved at this stage are informed of what the course of action is. Finally, the intervention commences and is monitored by the Support Team. It is the far-reaching goal of the Support Team to assist both students and teachers in bridging the gap between the acquisition of knowledge and the application of learning.

This model seeks to head off the need for classification and place in the mainstream teacher's hands a variety of teaching strategies that may enhance student achievement. Since it taps the expertise of the special education teachers assigned to the Support Team, the procedure enables either indirect or direct assistance by the special education teacher to the classroom teacher. Where direct intervention occurs, this is completed on a short-term basis with the intent of returning the student to his or her heterogeneous, mainstream class for the next lesson or unit. The approach also models for all teachers different ways in which the learning styles of students can be accommodated.

This model also supports the direction that the Office of Special Education is supporting. It has the focus of employing special education teachers to work during the day with mainstream staff to avert the need for CSE referrals. Since the program enables special education staff to work with the nonclassified student, it also has the side benefit of defusing the myth about special education students; these teachers are now viewed as learning specialists who are facilitating the acquisition of organization, thinking, writing, and speaking skills.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Herricks Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Herricks Middle School
ADDRESS: Hilldale Drive
Albertson, NY 11507
TELEPHONE: (516) 741-7800
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 690
CONTACT: John DeSilva, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

Students in technology class are involved in the study and building of model airplanes. Discussions include how the different control surfaces impact on the flight of the plane. Students eagerly await fly-off. They understand why and how an airplane can crash if a system fails or the pilot makes an error.

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Linda Adsitt, Assistant Principal
John Burns, Reading Department Chair

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

Interest in using typing as an instructional tool has been renewed. Keyboard knowledge is important for the effective use of computers. The 6th grade students at Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School receive one semester of keyboarding instruction. This is an opportunity for each student to learn keyboarding so that he or she will be able to key better and to use computers for writing.

The students receive keyboarding instruction on a rotating basis. (For example: Group I-Monday, Group II-Tuesday, Group III-Wednesday, then Group I-Thursday, etc.) Each group attends approximately 15 sessions per quarter for a total of 30 sessions. The classes are taught in the school's computer center, which includes 24 Apple computers interconnected by a CORVUS network.

During the first half of the sessions, the student goals are the basic alphabet (key positions), hand positions (without looking at the hands), position at the machine, and accuracy. The program "Key Words" helps the 6th graders to work individually with a screen gremlin cheering them on.

Research suggests that proper instruction in keyboarding skills can improve children's reading and writing ability. Keyboarding curriculum must be based on two principles: 1) Keyboarding instruction must occur in *addition* to the regular classroom curriculum. 2) Keyboarding exercises must be explicitly integrated with meaningful activities.

The keyboarding instruction in the 6th grade is integrated into other curriculum areas. It is especially useful for students in reading and writing (language arts). The students' keyboarding

skills are essential for word processing and other computer activities.

The semester of keyboarding instruction gives students the opportunity to become more proficient in the world of computer technology. It gives the students a useful skill for many classroom activities and assignments.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

The 6th grade reading program capitalizes upon the diverse talents of content area teachers and is structured around four thematic units of instruction. Students are involved in reading and writing activities centered upon literature in the area of sports, mystery, science fiction, and the sea. Within each thematic unit, instruction is focused upon reading materials related to the general overview. Imbedded within each unit are activities that promote the development of vocabulary, comprehension skills, and writing. The sea unit is further complemented with the interdisciplinary program, the *Voyage of the Mimi*. Opportunities for enrichment exist in the reading of popular paperbacks. Inservice workshops and summer curriculum revisions have taken place.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 15 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Frank Weiss, Counselor
Debbie Kenney, Resource Room Teacher
Terry Quarantilo, Remedial Reading Teacher
Shirley Martin, Teaching Assistant

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

Methods of intervention for academic difficulties have been used at Lewiston-Porter for many years. Last year, a middle school committee was formed to develop a more systematized team approach to academic intervention. Input was received from the building interdisciplinary teams and special-area teachers. After a year of research and trial and error, a workable model was developed and incorporated into a Middle School Intervention Handbook. The Handbook begins with an introduction and contains a listing of recommended intervention strategies to be considered by team teachers. Forms to assist in the monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting of individualized strategies are also included. All disciplinary teams maintain records of intervention strategies to ensure that they are implemented in a uniform manner. Identified students are reviewed regularly on a scheduled basis by team teachers, and program modifications are made as needed. Results are very encouraging to date. The intervention model will be revised and/or augmented as the need arises.

This intervention program meets the "at-risk" student's need for personal support using a structured program utilizing continued consultation, evaluation, and modification of program.

The Learning Skills Center is staffed by a teaching assistant and a teacher aide. Teachers may send students to the Center to use computer programs or to work on assignments individually or in small groups throughout the school day. Students must be signed up by their teacher prior to arrival and the student's assignment must be written on the appropriate form. Teachers may assign students to after-school study hall in the Center as needed once parental approval is received.

Grouping strategies used by staff members involve the use of the library and Learning Skills Center. Students are organized on the basis of need, with some using reinforcement or enrichment materials outside the classroom, while others remain with the teacher for more intense instruction.

The Learning Skills Center provides daily opportunities for flexible grouping based upon student needs and interests.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE: 2-3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

6-8 ESCAPE Science Program - The science classes are taught using the Environmental Science Concepts and Processes of Enquiry Program, which have been modified slightly to fit local needs. The students get a hands-on approach to science using lab work as a vehicle for learning. The students are involved in decision-making processes, which lead them to development of concepts. They are given the opportunity through this method to develop an ownership in the program, as they learn by doing.

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DISTRICT: Port Jefferson Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Port Jefferson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Spring Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
TELEPHONE: (516) 473-8151
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 264
CONTACT: Larry Lazar, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

During the study of the three branches of government, students in grade 7 participate in a Mock Trial. The study of the U. S. judiciary system is incorporated in this project.

The classroom is set up to look like an actual courtroom. The students select roles to play from a list of characters found in a Mock Trial manual. Each court official is chosen, and the trial begins. During this unit, students are instructed in the workings of the court as well as the judiciary system including the rights of an individual, police roles, types of courts, and variety of punishments. Practicing lawyers and judges are invited to class. In addition to students, teachers and administrators participate as witnesses.

The program involves students in a learning experience that helps to make them more aware of an important aspect of the judiciary system. It is possible that someday they may be called upon to appear in court. Another important outcome of this class activity is the realization of students that they have certain rights and protections under the law. A study of the types of courts and their jurisdiction is also part of this Mock Trial activity.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 15 years

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DISTRICT: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
SCHOOL: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
ADDRESS: Route 9W
Ravena, NY 12143
TELEPHONE: (518) 756-2155
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 532
CONTACT: Robert DeSarbo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

At R-C-S, Junior High School students are heterogeneously grouped in teams. A locally-funded remedial reading teacher and special education consultant teacher work in the class in a team-teaching system. Students who are learning disabled or identified as needing remedial help remain in class and receive services directly from specialists.

This program has been successful for the problem learner. It has helped English, science, social studies, and mathematics teachers to establish stronger programs for students with behavioral or learning problems. It has provided support to teachers in mainstreaming handicapped students.

Under the least restrictive guidelines, regular education can enable students to retain self-esteem, avoid a fragmented and expensive pullout program, and succeed academically.

Special education and remedial teachers can help regular teachers:

- Adapt instructional style and learning style.
- Cope with learner personality variables.
- Develop behavior management strategies to accommodate learner responses.
- Organize their classrooms to meet learner needs.
- Develop an awareness that they have a responsibility for *all* students assigned to them.

At the middle school level, many remedial and resource room teachers were trapped into serving as tutors for students. R-C-S moved special-area teachers into the 6th grade classroom because students need help in developing their skills as well as help in getting through course material. Adolescents, especially those with learning problems, are overwhelmed and disorganized in their first year in a middle school. Special area teachers help students master classwork, understand homework, and develop skills for studying and completing assignments.

The remedial and special education teachers also attend team meetings with regular teachers to discuss students' problems and monitor progress.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

During the last four years, Stimson Junior High School has

purchased several new science textbooks. In order to use these new books efficiently and productively, staff have developed study sheets that dovetail with the curriculum and these books. These work sheets were developed by teachers who would be actively using these books, and were written the summer before the books were first put into use. The teachers were given the state curriculum and the local curriculum, and they selected the chapters and sections that had to be covered. When the summer writing was completed, staff were given a composite booklet containing all the new worksheets. A pigeonhole cabinet was also provided to store the many sheets that had been duplicated in large enough quantities for students to have copies to work on. This program is a great success, and our staff uses the materials almost on a daily basis.

The rationale for developing these worksheets was to insure compliance with the newly developed New York State Competency Test. Every effort was made to have curriculum content thoroughly covered. In addition, the district is very much interested in reading across the academic curriculum. The study sheets develop better reading habits and coincide with the current emphasis sheets to insure reading of the required material. With specific questions keyed to exact pages, the students must first read in order to find the answers. The result is improved comprehension of scientific material.

When a student enters a special education program at Stimson Junior High School, the receiving teacher researches the student's records (psychological report, testing data, teacher anecdotals) to determine the student's individual learning style in terms of strong and weak modalities. The teacher uses this diagnostic data to plan effective teaching strategies in the special education classroom and disseminates the information to the student's mainstream teachers. Students are often grouped within the classroom according to their learning styles (auditory, visual, kinesthetic) and are taught through their strengths whenever possible. Whole group instruction tends to be multisensory in order to accommodate each of the varied learning styles within the group.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Wappingers Central School District
SCHOOL: Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
ADDRESS: 15 Myers Corners Road
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
TELEPHONE: (914) 298-3610
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** Not reported
CONTACT: Roberta Rinaldo, Coordinator of Special Projects

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

Wappingers Central School District has a group of teachers and one administrator who are qualified trainers in learning styles. They offer inservice and coaching assistance to teachers who wish to apply their knowledge to the classroom. Teachers learn how to develop tests that give alternatives for each of the four learning styles and how to conduct classes in order to keep each student involved and learning. Other learning style theories such as those that consider environment, visual learning vs. auditory, etc., and internal clocks are being investigated to be incorporated into a larger picture of learning styles.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Not Applicable
SCHOOL: William Spyropoulos
ADDRESS: 41-13 196th Street
Flushing, NY 11358
TELEPHONE: (718) 357-5583
GRADE SPAN: K-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 382
CONTACT: Arman Colangelo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: i

The principal, supervisory staff and teachers of William Spyropoulos School realize the need for the use of varied teaching strategies in the classroom and implementation of exploratory experiences for students. It was decided that there was a paucity of hands-on teaching techniques in the area of science in the classrooms of 6th, 7th and 8th grades, as well as a lack of exploratory and inductive experiences for children.

Teachers in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades were asked to participate actively in organization and implementation of plans to improve the teaching of science. The major goals of the program were to encourage the implementation of state objectives and mandates in the teaching of science in regard to process approaches as well as skills and knowledge.

The objectives of the plan were twofold:

- To encourage the use of practices of inquiry that are used by scientists to solve problems.
- To obtain specific knowledge of subject matter as well.

The teachers encouraged children in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades to become independent learners by experimenting and finding

solutions to problems. Two workshops for 6th and 7th grade students were scheduled with teachers to discuss and explain the program. Two workshops with parents were scheduled to explain the goals of the program and to gain their cooperation and support for the program.

Teachers report twice a semester at grade meetings. Teachers must report on changes of science attitudes and operational patterns. Teachers and principals monitor operational patterns to see if students are involved in research activities and exploration. Feedback from parents, students, and others is used to reevaluate the program's objectives and results. Changes are made accordingly. Results of checklists and questionnaires aid in the evaluation of the program. The evaluative measures are completed by parents, teachers, and students. Cooperation of parents, teachers and students is vital to success of program.

This program develops in children inquiry skills such as: classifying, creating models, formulating hypotheses, generalizing, identifying variables, inferring, interpreting data, making decisions, manipulating materials, measuring, observing, predicting, recording data, replicating and using numbers. Scientific attitudes are cultivated by: an appreciation and enjoyment of nature; investigative methods in the natural world; wanting to know and understand scientific concepts, terms and techniques; gaining accurate information, explanations, interpretations and predictions; acquiring investigation methods for the natural world; and respecting others and the environment.

The William Spyropoulos School sees this program as a vehicle for implementing state mandates in science education in New York State.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: Mark Twain Junior High School
ADDRESS: Woodlawns Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10704
TELEPHONE: (914) 963-4567
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 753
CONTACT: Ellen Devlin and Dan Devaney

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

To address the needs of students, Mark Twain Junior High offers an adjunct to the Reading Lab Remedial Program. This additional program was developed and is co-taught by reading and English teachers and meets many objectives of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. The reading and mathematics lab specialists work directly for and with the major content-area teachers (English, mathematics, social studies and science). This coteaching occurs in several ways. The actual choice of method is left to the teachers involved. The courses offered in this program are designed to meet the needs of students. The *Mission Statement*,.." working together to provide educational excellence and effectiveness..."forms the foundation of the "PITS" program (Partners in Teaching Skills).

Reading and content-area teachers have developed a course of study that embraces the six areas of competencies that research has indicated are necessary to learning: (Devine, *Teaching Study Skills*).

- Gathering new information and ideas (listening and reading)
- Recording them (through notetaking, outlining, or summarizing)
- Making sense of them (ny synthesizing and relating).
- Organizing them (through patterning, outlining, recording)
- Remembering (by relating and using specific devices).
- Using the new material (in re, orting, writing, test-taking).

These global competencies can be amplified after assessing student needs. A very partial listing of courses offered or skills to be taught are:

- Note-taking
- Map and globe
- Study
- Research
- Computation
- Test preparation
- Writing
- Written mat[illegible]matic problem solving
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension.

Two reading teachers participate in this program for two periods per day. The number of cooperative teaching periods for each class is determined by the number of participating English teachers.

Grouping is variable in response to the need of the group. Plans include:

Method 1: The reading teacher, having conferred with the English teacher, takes *x* number of students from the English teacher's class for *x* number of days for intensive writing skills, drill, and practice. (Drill includes the mastery of the parts of speech.)

Method 2: The reading teacher takes *x* number of students from the English teacher's class for *x* number days. On other specified days, the English and reading teachers co-teach in the English teacher's room.

Method 3: The reading and English teachers coteach in the classroom for *x* number of days.

Method 4: The English teacher divides the class into groups so that the skills to be mastered are covered by the reading teacher on a rotating basis.

Other options or variations are available to the teachers involved. It must, however, be stressed that the final choice is the one made by the subject-area teacher! To impose an option is counter-productive.

Success in the program is measured in four concrete ways:

- Success in passing (70 percent) criteria reference tests available to the reading specialists (some tests in mathematics are also available)
- Success in passing skills tests or teacher-made tests
- Successful completion of classroom assignments
- Successful completion of homework assignments.

A log of skills taught, methods and materials utilized, and grouping procedures defines the program.

The program develops reading/writing skills objectives specific to the needs of individual classes and students. A much greater number of students are provided with the requisite skills to pass minimal competency tests. The congruence goals of the Reading Department are enhanced and the problems of transference in learning minimized. By coteaching, the beneficiaries are the students. They benefit from a duality of approach and a diversity of experience.

Area j

Developing Interdisciplinary Programs

This section describes several interdisciplinary programs that help students integrate their studies and make connections across subject areas.

Area j: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bedford Central School District
  Fox Lane Middle School
- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #27
  Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
- Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
  Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
- Glen Cove City School District
  Robert M. Finley Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Hicksville School District #17
  Hicksville Middle School
- Irvington Union Free School District
  Irvington Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Marathon Central School District
  Appleby Elementary School
- Mineola Central School District
  Mineola Middle School
- Mt. Pleasant Central School District
  Westlake Middle School
- Nardin Academy
- New York City High Schools
  Martin Luther King Jr. High School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newark Valley Central School District
  Newark Valley Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- North Salem Central School District
  North Salem Middle School
- Northport-East Northport Union Free School District
  East Northport Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Queensbury Union Free School District
  Queensbury Middle School
- Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
  Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
- Rhinebeck Central School District
  Bulkeley Middle School
- Sherrill City School District
  Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Middle School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- Smithtown Central School District
  Great Hollow Intermediate School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Valley Stream Central High School
  Valley Stream North High School
- Yonkers City Schools
  Emerson Junior High School
- Yonkers City Schools
  John Burroughs Junior High School

DISTRICT: Bedford Central School District
SCHOOL: The Fox Lane Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 172
Bedford, NY 10506
TELEPHONE: (914) 241-6126
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Dennis McGrath, Director

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREAS: j

Curriculum for The Alternative Program involves all four academic subjects (English, social studies, science, and mathematics) and is approached as an interdisciplinary process. General concepts such as "communications," "survival," and "balance and order" are developed across all areas of the curriculum, become experiential, and are enriched by field trips and speakers.

Whenever possible, mathematics is integrated into a unit of study. In addition, each student is tested and given an individualized mathematics program.

Each curriculum unit terminates with a project designed to demonstrate the student's talents and subject mastery. The intimate nature of the program provides flexibility in scheduling, individualization in instruction, and concentration on skill development.

TAP's interdisciplinary curriculum has been in effect for five years. During that time, units on Balance and Order, Man's Relations to Water, Communication and Corporations have been developed and refined.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Because of a common planning time, teachers are able to work cooperatively among themselves to develop areas for interdisciplinary programs. Unity among all subject areas is vital to our academic process. Connections develop out of a normal flow, with numerous examples of both large- and small-group projects.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
ADDRESS: 320 Beach 104 Street
Rockaway Beach, NY 11694
TELEPHONE: (718) 945-2700
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,000
CONTACT: Ilana Block, Scholar Research Institute

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The *Scholar Research Institute* at JHS 180Q is a program for the potentially gifted and talented student who has exhibited the ability to sustain his/her interest in a chosen area of study. The uniqueness of the program lies in the opportunity for the students to engage in research activities in small groups on a daily basis.

The SRI program centers on exposing all students to a variety of experiences in each of the content areas. In order to provide continuity of instruction and to insure a sense of direction, a thematic approach is used. The SRI instructors, with input from district curriculum specialists, plan a course of study for the research period in which each segment augments the others and all relate to a specific theme (i.e., "The Tools of the Researcher," "The Scientist's World," "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"). The social studies teacher who is working with the class on an archeology unit works closely, then, with the science teacher to insure that the students are familiar with the scientific methodology required for such research. The teachers report that many SRI students are applying information and skills more effectively because of this holistic approach to research.

Students in SRI are constantly encouraged to carry and apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to every subject. By developing interdisciplinary programs in which teachers purposefully plan and demonstrate the interrelationships, concepts, bodies of knowledge, and skills, students begin to see patterns and make connections on their own.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
ADDRESS: Latkin Place
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
TELEPHONE: (914) 271-2191
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 285

CONTACT: Joseph Zajac, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Pierre Van Cortlandt began developing an interdisciplinary approach to middle school education more than 15 years ago. Academic teachers were organized into grade-level teams representing four disciplines: social studies, science, math, and English. Each team taught the same group of students using the interdisciplinary approach.

The philosophical basis for the interdisciplinary curriculum was a firm belief that different areas of knowledge inherently connect and that every aspect of student growth benefits from an emphasis on the interrelatedness of concepts and skills. Thus, the school sought themes that would encourage teachers and students to apply the specialized skills emphasized in each discipline to a central idea. This approach encourages students to see learning as a whole and to become more active participants in their education.

Perhaps the best way to clarify what is meant by interdisciplinary approach is to highlight one specific unit on one grade level. The first major unit in the 7th grade is The Environment. This focus permits work on research skills, a scientific exploration of ecological concepts, an examination of how government strives to maintain a balance between opposing viewpoints, statistics and their applications, writing to persuade, and public speaking. The major projects required for this unit are a position paper and an endangered species speech. The position paper asks students to select and research a controversial environmental issue from a teacher-made list of local, national, and international concerns. Then, utilizing the entire writing process from brainstorming to word processing, the students define the problem, trace its history, examine possible solutions, and advocate a specific course of action. Thus, the writer is asked to develop a personal opinion based on a careful examination of evidence.

The second major project is a speech about an endangered species. Again, the student's work begins with careful research that stresses the importance of recent data. After collecting information and organizing it on index cards according to specific categories provided by the team, the student prepares an oral presentation that includes: basic biological information, the historical significance of the species, reasons for endangerment, statistics, existing protective programs, and things students can do to help. This assignment combines individual investigation with group discussion about the information presented as the students share what they have learned with the class.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 15 years

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DISTRICT: Glen Cove City School District
SCHOOL: Robert M. Finley Middle School
ADDRESS: Forest Avenue
Glen Cove, NY 11542
TELEPHONE: (516) 759-7241
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 587
CONTACT: Sheryl Batholomew, Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Students in the 7th and 8th grades are required to study the history of the United States. They are also required to have a period of library as a minimum per week, and to do an interdisciplinary project. It is very important for students in the middle grades to maintain a broad base of learning. At this time, students deal with more conflicts than those that are found in the classroom. They need to see how all areas of the school connect and form a unified whole. A program of study that includes more than one area can be helpful in showing students the significance of all areas.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Research Project Infusing Science

Following the teaching of the Decision-Making Skills unit in Grade 6 English, a research project in science is instituted at a level that allows students to utilize the decision-making process in attempting to research, analyze, and present solutions to current societal issues (i.e., fossil fuels, OPEC, nuclear dangers, air pollution, solar energy). This project correlates the fundamentals of the scientific methods; the district writing process and skills taught in English; the research strategies, speaking skills, and listening skills taught in the language arts class; and group dynamics. It is a model of how skills and concepts taught in different subjects can be woven into a single project.

This project takes diverse actions of learning and demonstrates how they reinforce each other. Students also learn and develop an appreciation for the interrelatedness of what is taught in separate classes. They make connections that show them why

things are taught and how they can be used in other areas. In short, students practice/apply what was taught, and this gives meaning to instruction. This particular project takes a recognized program — decision making — and integrates it directly into another subject.

Living History

This is a program conducted by a 7th grade team that reflects the belief that students learn best when they are actively engaged in recreating the events that occurred in history. Over the years, students on this team have not only studied early American colonial life, but they have also reenacted the roles of the period and a historical battle of the era. These ideas have been applied to the Revolutionary War, the French and Indian War, and Civil War periods.

The year long program culminates in the reenactment of 24-hours in the life of a historical figure at an historical site, among which have been Gettysburg, Fort Sta[illegible], and Museum Village to name a few. Within each regiment, students earn rank based upon a system of merits and demerits earned during the year that accrue based upon behavior and attitude. The troops march, set up an authentic camp, and cook their own meals as was done in historical times. There is a mock battle and military review for parents and friends, followed by social events of the times. Soldiers are paid in scrip based on rank, and this is used to purchase drink for the evening. Guard duty for the camp occurs for one-hour tours throughout the night. All events are recorded on videotape.

This is a cross-curriculum project involving all academics, art, music, and technology. Students create their own wearing apparel and construct the tools and weapons needed for the reenactment. In addition, they learn the crafts of the era and practice those that are applicable during the experience. Among the objectives of the program are to: stimulate interest in historical periods; instill pride in self and country; show the human side of history; develop craft skills, involve the community; improve the self-esteem of students; and correlate the various school curricula.

This program is an excellent example of how an interdisciplinary project can be carried out throughout the entire year, emphasizing all academics while positively affecting the social and emotional level of its students. Through the system of merits and demerits, positive social interactions and behaviors have been fostered. Many students complete the experience with a great self-image and an increased level of self-confidence. This is truly an experience the students will never have again and will never forget. It takes instruction out of the realm of the abstract and grounds it in the concrete, which so many middle-level students need.

Alien Spaceship

This an 8th grade interdisciplinary experience for 40-50 students that is conducted for two 80-minute blocks of time, plus subsequent discussion time in English, science, social studies, or in combined classes. The experience is a simulation in which an alien spaceship approaches, and messages/descriptions of the event are released to the students at timed intervals. Prior to the messages, the students have been regrouped and given top-secret manuals that describe their current situation, their interests, and their roles. Each group functions as an advisory group to the national leader, who needs advice on whether to welcome or destroy the spacecraft. In this first phase of the project, which lasts for 80 minutes, a computer generates signals through a voice synthesizer, and messages/information are given to the groups on a time-destruct basis. Ultimately, each group must make a written recommendation to the national leader (who is an adult chosen from the staff). Throughout this time period the leader can avail him or herself of the services of the Press Secretary to obtain or release information; there is a Press Corps, which covers the events; and a secondary domestic crisis occurs with information going only to the leader, who must decide what to do with this diversion. Another key point is that groups can form coalitions to sway the leader's opinion; however, groups can only communicate through non-verbal means.

In the second phase of the simulation, the Press Corps must create a newspaper utilizing a desktop publisher. The paper must contain editorials, political cartoons, interviews, and details of the crisis as it unfolds. The Corps must assemble and distribute the paper later in the simulation and also play a key role in phase three.

In phase three, students return for another 80-minute period where a press conference is conducted by the Press Secretary. Here, each advisory group chair announces his/her group's recommendations and is then questioned by the Press and the national leader. Finally, the leader announces his or her decision supported by his or her reasons. That decision is keyed into the National Defense Computer, and the consequences of the decision are announced through a computer driven voice synthesizer.

Following the announcement of the consequences, the events, the decision, and the consequences are discussed in a large-group setting. In subsequent classes of science, English, or social studies or in combined interdisciplinary groupings, prepared questions are answered in writing and discussed. The group's deliberations include the analysis of verbal and non-verbal communications, the evolution of leadership, how decisions are developed within a group setting, group dynamics, the influence of the media upon our perceptions, and the social ideas of bias, prejudice, and stereotypes.

This is a true interdisciplinary project that also involves restructing a student's schedule to complete the simulation. The simulation itself encompasses writing and speaking skills, application of the school-wide decision-making process, knowledge of social and scientific issues/concepts, the ability

research-based study procedures with the curricular content in science and social studies.

The second program is the adoption of an art theme for the whole school for the whole year. Themes have been the circus, the jungle, the sea, master painters/museums, birds, etc. By prearrangement with the other teachers, works of appropriate literature, field trips, and special schoolwide events and activities are planned to link the respective subject matter classes to the art theme. For the 1989-90 school year, the IMS theme is the "Olde Wild West." Under the Coordinated Team of Teachers Model, numerous interdisciplinary units of study are developed. Most frequent among these are linkages between English and social studies classes. Anticipated for the 1989-90 school year are interdisciplinary units on the westward movement in the pioneering days and a comparative analysis of the movement of businesses from the Northeast to the Southwest, etc.

The study skills and art programs have been in practice for 11 and 5 years respectively. They permit pupils to see the interrelationships of academic skill acquisition with other fields of study. In addition to the direct benefit to pupils, the study skills and art programs bring teachers together in cooperative planning and teaching experiences. This helps to stimulate ideas, build morale, and improve the quality of one's teaching, the latter since it involves joint responsibility for assignments and projects, etc.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: Study skills - 11 years
Art - 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 ENROLLMENT: 627
CONTACT: John Burns, Reading Department Chair

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The 7th grade reading program is designed around two major thematic units and is delivered by teams of content-area teachers.

The conflict unit and the biography/research unit are presented to students by English, social studies, science, and health teachers.

The conflict unit introduces and explores the concepts of conflict between peers, family, society, and the handicapped. Building positive self-esteem is addressed through short stories, video presentations, and guest speakers. Frequent writing activities promote students' self discovery and opportunities for expression.

The biography/research unit extends and widens the view of self. Students study the historical development of biography as a type of literature and are guided through the reading of a full-length biography and written report. The life of a famous American author, Samuel Clemens, is studied as a model for a modern biography.

In the research unit, students receive rigorous instruction on how to write a research paper. They are able to choose from among several global areas—presented by the content-area teachers—an area of particular interest. The completed document is sent home, as part of the district policy, as a sample of writing in reading.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 7 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 622
CONTACT: Donald Shrimpton, Vocal Music Teacher
Cathy Burns, Art Teacher
Terry Savery, Art Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Each year the middle school vocal music teacher initiates a musical extravaganza that provides all three grade-level choruses an opportunity to perform using a theme. All other students and staff are invited. This past year the program was entitled "Circus of Stars." Many teachers representing all areas of the curriculum become involved in a variety of ways. For example, home and career classes prepare and sell food and drink while the art department works with students, preparing scenery and billboards. Classroom teachers develop performances with students and in many cases become part of the act. Parents assist with costumes and organization. These programs generate a great deal of middle school involvement and cooperation among all segments of our school community. These shared activities also provide for active participation in a program that meets both the spirit and philosophy of middle school.

This program involves parents and community members; it

involves students in their learning; it encourages them to develop social skills and to take risks. Teachers are encouraged to participate in interdisciplinary instruction in a nonthreatening manner.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Marathon Central School District
SCHOOL: Appleby Elementary School
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 339
Marathon, NY 13803
TELEPHONE: (607) 849-3281
GRADE SPAN: K-6 **ENROLLMENT:** 520
CONTACT: Lon Hayes, Curriculum Coordinator

PROMOSING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: j

During the school year 1988-89 staff members working with students in grades 5 and 6 designed an interdisciplinary program integrating concepts in the content areas of science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts. Preliminary group work for this endeavor took place as a result of: faily development during September's Conference Days, and regularly scheduled faculty meetings. As a result of the increased common planning time, teachers were able to move readily on the exchange of curricular ideas.

This has led to:

1. an heightened awareness of other team member's content responsibilities
2. a reinforcement of the important that the process approach plays in the education of middle-level children
3. a need to identify desired student outcomes in order to insure academic excellance, and
4. a decision to provide students with a unified unit of instruction directed towards a real audience.

Staff then met to identify the goals and objectives for their appropriate grade as outlined by the various State syllabi, local curriculum guides, and mission statement of the school. The unit of instruction studied by the Fifth grade was the *Voyage of the Mimi*, while the sixth graders concentrated on the Middle Ages. Classrooms under the direction of each teacher took on a cooperative, collaborative attitude with students working on projects related to the common theme of the unit. Reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic combined efforts to show how the Mimi progressed on her voyage. Discussions on alchemy, Robin Hood, coats of arms, and *The Door in the Wall* replaced the traditional classroom assignments. Displays, projects, writing pieces, etc., were exhibited by students at the spring Academic Attraction evening held at the school for students, parents, and community.

This program is now undergoing expansion as the fifth and sixth grade teachers have joined forces to create a 5/6 team. Cooperative planning now takes place for the whole team, as well as for smaller, more specific components. An outgrowth of this plan includes not only integrated units as described above, but two other equally important phases. In keeping with the middle-school philosophy of a preference of active versus passive learning activities, one day each month is designated as *HOMEROOM DAY*. During this day the regular schedule for academics is replaced by a full day of pre-planned activities. The objective of the 5/6 team is to provide enrichment activities for students centering around global, cultural, and curricular issues. Within the framework of the planning the day's activities staff has the flexibility to schedule mini-sessions in conjunction with the rest of the team, team teach with members of their specific grade level, do an individual session, and attend the general session. One staff member takes responsibility for coordinating each HOMEROOM DAY, however all staff take part in sharing ideas and planning activities. Activities range from taste testing foods of other cultures; dances and folk songs from other countries; locating the country, or news item on the map, on a time line, or in relation to other meaningful events; reading related literature with written reactions; attending presentations by guest speakers; etc. Topics under consideration include the study of holidays; a Trip Around the World; Interesting Vacation/Dream Spots; Different Country, Different Cultures; An Archeological Dig; Food, Glorious Food; Host Your Own Game Show; etc.

Recognizing the fact that much learning can and does take place outside the direct teacher instructional period, a program is now underway by staff to capture this valuable commodity. The 5/6 team in conjunction with specialists and other staff members launched a new midday enrichment program, affectionately nicknamed MEP, during the fall of 1989. The premise is based on the middle-level philosophy of encouraging students to explore, learn and grow both academically and socially. With this in mind elective courses were designed and offered to students. The number of courses varies with each block, but averages between 10 and 15. A partial listing of electives includes: sign language, computer club, make and take board games, drama club, school news and intramurals. Each selection block consists of a ten week time frame during which time the students can choose up to as many as five. The electives are offered on the value of their multi-sensory and integrated learning approach, as well as their contribution to the development of the whole child. Many of the activities have fancy course titles, but the bottom line is that they help students apply knowledge and techniques learned in the classroom, promote cooperation in small groups, provide an age appropriate setting for schedule choices; promote student responsibility within the group, allow for teacher/student rela-

tionships outside the traditional classroom, and involve students in interdisciplinary activities. Learning takes place in a variety of settings and at different rates. The 5/6 team at Appleby recognizes these critical components and therefore utilizes the interdisciplinary approach outlined above to enhance the education of students in their charge.

The program advocates a process approach, eliciting staff participation and student feedback. It recognizes the specific needs of the school population, promotes and encourages home/school relations, and encourages collaborative planning. The program depends on the commitment of staff, community and students, thus insuring ownership. Secondly the plan is simple and time-efficient. The interdisciplinary approach allows for optimal use of available staff, facilities and student time. The plan revolves around shared decision making with student and staff input, and salutes alternative learning experiences for students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Mineola Central School District
SCHOOL: Mineola Middle School
ADDRESS: 200 Emory Road
Mineola, NY 11501
TELEPHONE: (516) 741-4943
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 600
CONTACT: Fern Moskowitz, Administrative Assistant

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Mineola Middle School has introduced a pilot program in classroom instruction involving the use of interdisciplinary units. Four content-area teachers, who team up to share approximately 100 students, try, whenever possible, to use interdisciplinary units.

Interdisciplinary units allow the teachers to take specific curriculum needs of Mineola Middle School students and then adapt them to the other three curriculum areas. The use of such units gives the students a feeling of cohesiveness in their education, a feeling that there is relevance to what they learn, a realization that there is continuous interaction among the teachers with regard to the curriculum and how the students learn, that learning takes place in a variety of ways (large groups, small groups, etc.).

Not all interdisciplinary units involve all subjects. For example, a two-subject unit was done on Indians and involved only English and social studies. In English class, the students were reading *Light in the Forest*. This unit involved using the social studies class as the forum to learn factual information to compare to the information culled from the literary selection. The culmination project was a writing assignment begun in social studies class (brainstorming and rough draft) with completion in the Computer Lab using Bank Street Writer to write reports. In addition, outside projects related to the book were done jointly in both classes.

Mineola Middle School's interdisciplinary program has lead to continuous articulation between the teachers in order to provide their classes with basic enrichment and reinforcement activities between subjects. The team meeting allows for daily discussions of the content being covered in each subject so that even small relationships in curriculum can be explored during class.

Additionally, curriculum support of topics is easily shared by the teachers. For example, when map skills were being taught in social studies, the math teacher used the opportunity to link her curriculum by jumping to the unit on measurement. Another practice used by these teachers is the use of questions, extra credit, and bonuses on information learned in other classes. The social studies unit test, for example, had bonus questions on a literary selection.

Finally, current events are used in every class to make students aware of the world around them. Even the mathematics teacher is using the newspaper in class to demonstrate how interrelated mathematics is with current events. Each teacher treats the current events in a manner commensurate with his or her subject. However, the students' awareness has been heightened by this approach to current affairs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Mt. Pleasant Central School District
SCHOOL: Westlake Middle School
ADDRESS: Westlake Drive
Thornwood, NY 10594
TELEPHONE: (914) 769-8540
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 357
CONTACT: Greg Bobro, Social Studies
Sue Goldberg, English

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: j

This program focuses on a concept important to eighth grade students and articulates it through the combined disciplines of English and social studies. The concept is: The way students see themselves will determine they way they behave toward others. Since historically society has seen immigrants as "oth-

ers," periods of immigration serve as an appropriate vehicle for teaching this concept.The forty lesson unit consists of four elements. The first is an awareness of perceptions of the self and others, integrating the English and social studies classes completely in discussions ranging from optical illusions to a view of culture. Literature forms another important strand in the unit. Both fiction and first person experiences are read and discussed to explore the thoughts and feelings of immigrants. Poetry and song is incoporated as well. Historical information about the waves of immigration from the late 1800's to the present is introduced through readings, lectures, graphs and charts. Students prepare a family tree to get a sense of their personal history. The final element is experiential, as students simulate the immigrant's journey through Ellis Island and write oral histories of family and community members to further enhance their understanding of human behavior. A wide variety of teaching methods, (cooperative learning, moral reasoning, observing, discussion, notetaking, field trip) are used in this unit in one eighth grade class. Back to back scheduling allows a double period with both the English and social studies teachers present for both periods.

With the development of this unit on immigration students will be able to reach the following goals:

1. to develop high level thinking skills
2. to provide opportunities for students to make connections between areas of study
3. to integrate the arts with social studies and English
4. to provide more opportunities for creativity and use of imagination
5. to help students better understand their own behavior through the study of literature and historic events
6. to expand students' cultural awareness through more learning experiences outside the school setting.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Not Applicable
SCHOOL: Nardin Academy
ADDRESS: 135 Cleveland Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
TELEPHONE: (716) 881-6262
GRADE SPAN: Pre K-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 311
CONTACT: Mary Ann Endres, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

1. For grades 7 and 8, three of the novels to be read are both language arts and social studies based.
2. For grades 7 and 8, computer literacy, keyboarding skills, and writing proficiency are made parts of the language arts program by:
   - Scheduling one quarter of typing for every student
   - Opening a second computer room for a writing lab. All language arts teachers have received training in Appleworks.
3. For the 1990 Science Fair, the following plan will be used:
   - The scientific portion will be, of course, completed within the science lab.
   - The writing portion will be completed through the writing lab.
   - The construction of the projects will be addressed through art classes.

The benefits of such practices are as follows:

- More efficient use of student time spent on homework assignments, and
- Increased student awareness of a course's relevance to other courses' skills as well as life skills.

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DISTRICT: New York City High Schools
SCHOOL: Martin Luther King Jr. High School
ADDRESS: 122 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10023
TELEPHONE: (212) 864-1202
GRADE SPAN: 9-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 3500
CONTACT: Steve Wynn, Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: j

The Interdisciplinary Educational Approach (IDEA) program at Martin Luther King Jr. High School provides instruction and support to students in mathematics, social studies and English. Three teachers, in collaboration with a teacher coordinator, meet on a daily basis during a common planning period to design integrated curricula activities and enrichment for common classes of students.

The integration of English, social studies and mathematics provides a meaningful learning experience for students and teachers alike. Students learn topics and skills in a broader educational context, allowing for the organization of knowledge in terms of principles and ideas. Collaboration increases the teacher's sense of professionalism and facilitates the learning of teaching skills in a variety of situations and contexts.

The IDEA program has the following features:

1. Common planning time
   The three teachers and coordinator meet each morning to plan and review activities appropriate for implementa-

tion, as well as assess student participation and progress.

2. Common classes

   All three teachers share the same sets of students, allowing for the integration of activities through the development and reinforcement of common topics and themes. This offers students the opportunity of belonging to a support group of peers and teacher who meet and work together on a regular basis.

3. Block-programming

   Classes are scheduled consecutively in the same room.

4. Team-teaching

   Two teachers are assigned to work together during the same class period(s). If possible, the third teacher is given lunch, or a "preparation period" during this time. Thus all teachers in the program can be together in class simultaneously. (Presently, the social studies and English teachers are assigned to the same class for two consecutive periods, creating in essence a "social studies/language" class.)

5. Variety of teaching strategies

   Each Monday is set aside for INDEPENDENT STUDY at any of five "learning stations" situated around the room. These include a communication center, a research lab, a center for applied knowledge, a center for symbols and logic, and a literature center.

   Tuesday emphasizes LITERATURE and LANGUAGE skills, which include applications in the content areas. Journal and learning log entries are shared (optional).

   Wednesday and Thursday offer activities that engage the students in COOPERATIVE LEARNING, including the publication of a class "newsmagazine" (issued at the end of each marking period), and the creation and production of group VIDEO projects.

   Friday students spend time working on COMPUTERS, and in another period participate in COMMUNITY FORUM.

6. Community forum

   Every Friday, students and teachers meet and discuss a variety of issues and concerns raised during the course of the week. (Topics are solicited verbally or in written form through a suggestion box.) The role of facilitator is rotated and includes all members in the IDEA program. (Shy or reluctant students have the option of being co-facilitators with another student or teacher.)

   During this time, the week's activities are reviewed and various policies assessed. Students are given the opportunity to express their opinion, to share their feelings and experiences, and to offer suggestions for future activities.

7. Extracurricular activities/student incentives

   Trips that reflect and/or complement the topics and activities that go on in class are taken regularly and include museums, exhibits, performances, restaurants, and so on. Finally, an IDEA "logo" was designed by one of the students in the program and each student receives a t-shirt and button with the IDEA logo printed on it.

The interdisciplinary program implemented at Martin Luther King Jr. High School applies a variety of strategies and approaches that support the organizational, instructional, self-developmental and social philosophy of middle-level education. In particular, it offers the student the opportunity of belonging to a support group of peers and teachers who meet and work together on a regular basis. The integration of English, social studies and mathematics provides a meaningful learning experience for students and teachers alike. Students learn topics and skills in a broader educational context, allowing for the organization of knowledge in terms of principles and ideas. Collaboration increases the teacher's sense of professionalism and facilitates the learning of teaching skills in a variety of situations and contexts.

Through vehicles such as Community Forum, students take a personal role in their own educational development. Students gain confidence in determing goals and priorities and a schedule for achieving them. Such activities stimulate the student's need to communicate ideas and foster attitudes of open-mindedness and sensitivity to others. By providing an environment which challenges yet supports the student's attempts to master new ideas and skills, the interdisciplinary program at Martin Luther King demonstrates that learning can be a challenging and rewarding experience.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Each year, the 7th grade team participates in a winter ecology program at the Cumming Nature Center. This becomes a total team activity with much involvement of the students at the school in preparing for the trip. The science, social studies, and English departments work together to make the activities at the nature center meaningful for the students. Since this is done in the winter, the history and uses of snowshoes is included as

well as a study of winter food pyramids, weather, how animals adapt for survival, animal tracks, the pioneers, and literature such as "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." The students interact with teachers and each other in a different setting while actively participating in the learning process. The team concept and flexible scheduling help to allow this process to occur.

Team Activity - Summer Curriculum Projects

The 8th grade team was given time to work on interdisciplinary projects during the summer of 1989. As a result of this work some of the projects included:

- Greek plays (social studies-English)
- Animal stories (English-science)
- Research projects (English-social studies-library)
- Test-taking skills and essay writing (English-social studies)
- Periods in history and literature studies.

The parents were involved in some of the end-products of these events. They were invited to Author's Teas, Greek Plays, and other dramatizations. The parents were contacted through team meetings.

Social studies and math teachers in the 6th grade are working together to develop activity packets. These packets emphasize map skills, graphing, charts, time lines, and time zones. During these units, the teachers will be cooperatively working with students and sharing grading procedures and grades.

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DISTRICT: Newark Valley Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Valley Middle School
ADDRESS: Whig Street
Newark Valley, NY 13811
TELEPHONE: (607) 642-5524
GRADE SPAN: 4-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 555
CONTACT: Robert Gwinn, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The concept of working two separate courses together to give the student more of a complete experience is often discussed but seldom done. At Newark Valley Middle School, a way was found to give students this experience. Newark Valley uses Module #7 from the technology program as the core for the interdisciplinary project. This module, called "How Resources Are Processed by Technological Systems," is composed of four basic performance objectives. Each objective fits in well with one of the academic core subjects.

Objective #1 deals with traditional and modern material conversion processes. By discussing this conversion in social studies, it is easy to see the traditional processes by building a diorama of some part of the history unit. The students now get to research then build some traditional item such as shelters or transportation methods. Students are therefore forced to learn more about their history but in a hands-on way.

Objective #2 deals with processing information and communicating a message. Using the three basic means to communicate: graphic, photographic, and electronic, students get to see how the same message appears using three different processes. English and foreign language classes can reinforce writing and speech skills by letting students work in groups and produce some sort of a message or advertisement.

Objective #3 deals with energy conversion processes and fits in well with science class. Since middle school science deals with life sciences, growing seeds of radishes and beans in school milk cartons gives students the opportunity to see what happens as various resources are added or taken away. Examples of soil-less energy conversion can be demonstrated by building hydroponic units, and interesting data can be produced.

The last objective deals with data processing, where the computer and its software should be used to process data and help make decisions. This unit can be tied in nicely with mathematics by using model rocketry as the source to generate lots of data. By asking students to calculate rocket acceleration and height, it is quickly discovered that necessary math functions can be quickly done by computer. Students then construct model rockets and fly them. By using an altimeter to determine rocket height, students compare theoretical and actual results. Many mathematical concepts are used, but with a direct cause, much more is learned.

Doing an interdisciplinary project requires some special scheduling between the technology education teacher and the academic subjects with which he or she will be working. Newark Valley works three classes of one subject for about two weeks, then rotates the daily periods to fit the other two classes into the project. All in all for four subjects with five classes, each consumes the equivalent of one period for 40 weeks with the technology education teacher. By teaming up technology education with one subject each 10 weeks, four academic subjects can be tied into the interdisciplinary project.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School

ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3251
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 1001
CONTACT: Dorothea A. Kuebler, 6th Grade Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The goals of the Interdisciplinary Studies for the 6th grade are to assure that:

- Students will come away from each unit of study with a greater vision of the times in which they live, of the issues they are expected to act upon, and of the choices they can make as students, as citizens and as people on a fragile but precious planet.
- Students will achieve a love of sharing, a passion for connecting in a kingdom of thought based on Bloom's Taxonomy.

The objectives are:

- To teach children not only to study only the basic content of subject matter in the various disciplines but also to study subject matter from various perspectives and how they interrelate in order to reach higher levels of thinking.
- To engage children in cooperative learning with their peers in pairs and in groups to further their understanding of the curriculum.

The Interdisciplinary Studies program not only complements but also supplements and enhances state curricula.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: North Salem Central School District
SCHOOL: North Salem Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Route 124
North Salem, NY 10560
TELEPHONE: (914) 669-5414
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 195
CONTACT: Patricia P. Cyganovich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

North Salem Middle School is committed to providing opportunities to enhance student learning and self-esteem. Overnight trips offering curricula-related experiences, while providing a balance between academic and personal social growth, are used as vehicles for this commitment. These trips are progressive in nature in that each grade level has its own itinerary designed for the specific maturity level and educational needs of its students. Individual responsibility and independence increase with each successive grade. In order to assure a positive cognitive experience, each trip is planned with interdisciplinary activities.

Grade 6 - Science and Environment Study-related Encampment at the Greenkill Outdoor Education Center, Huguenot, New York (3 days, 2 nights). The interdisciplinary activities involving science, social studies, English, art, and mathematics include:

- Pretrip activities - budgeting, grade-level orientation meetings, plus coordinated science and mathematics preparation lessons.
- Trip activities - various (field, stream, pond, and forest).
- Posttrip activities - journal writing, illustrated narrative reports, and presentation.

Grade 7 - Social studies/science-related trip to Boston, Mass. (2 days, 1 night). Interdisciplinary activities involving social studies, science, English and mathematics include:

- Pretrip activities - fund raising and social studies/English coordinated activities relating historic sights to be visited to American literature.
- Trip activities - various experiences ranging from visits to Plimouth Plantation to the Boston Museum of Science.
- Posttrip activities - writing articles related to each site visited.

Grade 8 - Social studies-related trip to Washington, DC (3 days, 2 nights) Interdisciplinary activities involving social studies, English, mathematics, and science include:

- Pretrip activities - fund raising, class discussion and notes for each site to be visited plus charting and estimating distances and travel time between itinerary sights.
- Trip activities - provide a variety of experiences from meeting our Congressman, to placing a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, to visiting the Smithsonian Museum.
- Posttrip activities - require completing a journal with notes, personal reactions, and postcard pictures of each sight visited.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 9 years

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DISTRICT: North Salem Central School District
SCHOOL: North Salem Middle School

ADDRESS: Old Route 124
North Salem, NY 10560
TELEPHONE: (914) 669-5414
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 195
CONTACT: Patricia P. Cyganovich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

North Salem Middle School is committed to enhancing student learning through interdisciplinary projects at both the 7th and 8th grade levels. Several of the projects are outlined below:

- Students read several historical novels, poetry, and short stories in English class when they are studying specific time periods or events in history.
- Writing assignments are taught and reinforced in both the English and social studies classes. The social studies teacher may at times present the format for the writing assignment and model the assignment using historical or current events. The English teacher may follow up with a literature-based assignment using the same format.
- The 7th grade English and social studies teachers work cooperatively to enable their students to develop a newspaper on the American Revolutionary War.
- "The Voyage of the Mimi" is a 13-week interdisciplinary study of humpback whales in the Gulf of Maine developed by Bank Street College. North Salem Middle School has adapted this program not only to fit the curricula of math and science (for which it was designed), but also to involve the content areas of English and social studies.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2-4 years

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DISTRICT: North Salem Central School District
SCHOOL: North Salem Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Route 124
North Salem, NY 10560
TELEPHONE: (914) 669-5414
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: 195
CONTACT: Patricia P. Cyganovich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

For the past 16 years, North Salem's 6th grade has been involved in outdoor education. The program has been refined and reconstructed to a three-day, two-night interdisciplinary program with emphasis on science and peer relationship in a setting other than the classroom. We run the camping experience in the fall with the goals of fostering independence from home and family, group and independent decision making, and an opportunity for teachers to become acquainted with the students outside of a classroom setting.

The groundwork is laid in the spring, when 5th grade parents are invited to an evening presentation telling about the encampment. Children are encouraged to earn money for the camping fee by doing summer jobs so they will feel that this is truly their activity.

In September, the students are involved in mapping, coordinate geometry, and budgeting in math. All fees are deposited into the class treasury, and the elected officers write the necessary checks. The basic fundamentals of science are taught in order to understand the planned science activities at camp. Health class deals with clothing appropriate for the weather; personal needs are assessed. A self-development unit is taught in health and careers fostering cooperation, tolerance, positive awareness, and individual differences. The physical education department introduces an introduction to "Project Adventure," which will be followed up at camp.

The science activities the students may choose from at camp are: aquatic ecology, pond and stream ecology, forest ecology, field and meadow ecology, wild life, geology, map and compass, survival, and camping skills, as well as archeology, canoeing, contemporary environmental topics, and games based on environmental studies. During this time, the students learn about communal living, fire and personal safety, logistics of loading and unloading gear using teamwork, sharing and caring for common space, positive communications, i.e., "Put Ups, Rather Than Put Downs." Mathematics is used in the computation of waste foods, which are graphed at each meal. Good manners are emphasized in the dining hall. Student waiters share responsibilities of serving and cleaning up after meals. The camping experience in itself is only the beginning of an eight-month follow-up as we are constantly recalling activities that relate to the camping experience. Immediately following, the children write letters of appreciation to staff, and they select their most interesting journal writing to edit and rewrite for their writing folder. During science and social studies, all activities from the encampment are listed, and each child selects his or her favorite and writes a narrative report with illustration. These are edited and shared with classmates, corrected, and a final copy is rewritten for the school newspaper. An oral presentation is made for students, staff, and parents, which is videotaped for presentation during parent-conference day.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 16 years

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DISTRICT: Northport-East Northport Union Free School District

SCHOOL: East Northport Middle School
ADDRESS: Fifth Avenue
East Northport, NY 11731
TELEPHONE: (516) 261-9000 ext. 181
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** Not reported
CONTACT: William Muller, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

All sixth-graders are invited to participate in the Frost Valley experience. The entire grade, their teachers and additional support staff travel to the center in November for environmental and outdoor educational experiences that include the integration of content-area and environmental issues.

Upon their return, students and teachers become involved in interdisciplinary learning activities that further enhance what they have learned. Some of these activities include literary efforts, newspaper writing, and publication of research projects.

The adolescent needs to see the purpose in what is being taught and learned. One way of making instruction meaningful is through interdisciplinary programming. Students do integrate their math, science, social studies, language arts, home and career skills, technology, and physical education in an environment that helps achieve this goal. Their studies are communicating and consulting under the environmental learning concept. The program is preplanned with students, implemented, and assessed.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 485
CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Each developmental team member is linked with an academic teacher of his or her choice. They plan and deliver an integrated instructional unit in which both teachers share responsibility. Two results of these interdisciplinary projects are a Career-Sandwiches-In program that brings local business people into school at lunch time to meet with students, and a Computer-Audio-Visual Club that meets during the activity period. Both vehicles provide many opportunities for integrated student projects between our library, technology, home and career skills, and general academic faculty.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

DISTRICT: Queensbury Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Queensbury Middle School
ADDRESS: 75 Aviation Road
Queensbury, NY 12804
TELEPHONE: (518) 793-8811
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1000
CONTACT: Douglas Purdy, Technology Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Queensbury has recently refurbished the two existing laboratories and added a new facility to meet the rising population served. The laboratories were developed with a specific philosophy that equally reflects the three areas of technology: information, biologically related, and physical.

Practices in place and under development:

- The development of cocurricular activities involving the science and technology departments.
- Students are experiencing biological technology in such areas as tissue culturing, hydroponics, and computer sensing of human functions such as heartbeat, brain waves, and muscle development.
- Computer literacy is gained through exposure to such areas as: computer control of machines, Lego-Logo and CNC, desktop publishing and laser graphics using the Macintosh, telecommunications, and other modern technologies.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

DISTRICT: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
SCHOOL: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
ADDRESS: Route 9W
Ravena, NY 12143
TELEPHONE: (518) 756-2155

GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 532
CONTACT: Robert DeSurbo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

At Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk, junior high school teachers have developed several successful interdisciplinary projects. These projects were an outgrowth of the team approach. Teachers expressed interest in starting interdisciplinary projects that would help students integrate their program of study. As the school moved to heterogeneous grouping, teachers needed avenues to accommodate different levels of students with varied learning styles.

The district staff development committee offered $1,000 to teachers as summer curriculum grants. For the past two summers, teachers have developed several of these interdisciplinary projects:

1. Orienteering - an integrated unit for 6th grade:

This is an interdisciplinary unit relating the skills taught in science, mathematics, technology, and social studies to their utilization in our technological world. Prior to the start of this two-week unit on orienteering, 6th grade students were introduced to the following topics:

Mathematics
- Angle measurement
- 360 in a circle
- Use of a protractor
- Estimation of distance.

Science
- Introduction to typographical maps
- Interpretation of simple map symbols
- Identification of land forms on maps.

Social Studies
- Utilization of latitude and longitude
- Identification of cardinal directions
- Descriptions of types of maps
- Identification of parts of a map.

Technology
- History of a compass
- Importance of the compass
- History of maps
- Modern-day navigational system.

The two-week orienteering unit involved 15 activities. After an orientation to orienteering, students were taken step by step through a series of activities: maps, pace count, using compasses, facing cardinal points, and using protractors. Classes then completed the following outdoor orienteering activities: games, a scavenger hunt, compass walks, and land navigation. Students followed compass bearings through a wooded area along an established course for evaluation teachers gave students a self-evaluation and used a teacher-made checklist of the students' accomplishments.

2. The American Revolution: An English and Social Studies Curriculum

An English and social studies teacher created this interdisciplinary unit to develop a better understanding of the American Revolution as well as connections between disciplines. Using a whole-language approach, the English teacher used the novel *April Morning*, a fictional account set in Lexington on the eve of the Revolution. Using literature as well as the social studies curriculum, teachers focused activities on point of view, cause and effect, historical fact, geography, the genre of historical fiction, and integrated language arts activities: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. During the six-week unit, English and social studies lessons were integrated.

3. Managing the Community's Solid Waste

This 7th grade interdisciplinary project was developed by social studies, technology, science, and math teachers. Through participation in this project, students developed an awareness of the solid waste management crisis and the need for community action citizens can take to begin to solve the problem. Parents were also involved in the project. Students weighed trash at home, and families participated in school recycling projects. The project crossed all disciplines and involved reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, and problem solving. Most important, students were shown the consequences if habits do not change. During this project, students were engaged in such activities as:

- Recycling office paper
- Studying the municipal work system
- Studying trash at home
- Aluminum can recycling
- Experiments - how landfills are constructed
- Compost project
- Surveys - cafeteria.

These three interdisciplinary projects can easily be implemented by any team of teachers. Students have enjoyed these hands-on interdisciplinary programs. Teachers enjoyed the project which further developed collegiality.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 1/2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Rhinebeck Central School District
SCHOOL: Bulkeley Middle School

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 351
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
TELEPHONE: (914) 876-3075
GRADE SPAN: 6-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 173
CONTACT: Sharon Hicks and Phyllis Swertfeger

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *j*

Each year the 6th and 7th grade science teachers and students hold a Science Fair. The Science Fair involves parent cooperation and support. It also involves the English teachers who work with the students during the research phase of their science project. A time line is developed, giving students precise due dates for the various aspects of the project. Since it is an active research project, it takes several months to complete. In March, during Middle-Level Education Week, the Science Fair is held and the projects judged. That evening, the parents come to view the Fair. By deeply involving the English teachers in the creation of the research papers that accompany the science projects, students learn to apply the skills that they are learning in English class to their science projects.

An interdisciplinary project of several months duration combines scientific techniques and high-quality written and oral expression. The Science Fair project also depends upon parent support for successful completion. Student projects are judged on set criteria by a panel of experts. Students learn to work independently without close teacher supervision, to explore an idea of personal interest, and to present their findings to a panel of judges.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Sherrill City School District
SCHOOL: Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Middle School
ADDRESS: Route 31, Box 128
Verona, NY 13478
TELEPHONE: (315) 363-4200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 383
CONTACT: Robert Biehl, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *j*

During the past few years, a number of interdisciplinary programs have been successfully completed within teams. These programs have been organized during student contact time or during regular classroom time. It is up to the teams to plan the subject strategy to use when planning for the project. Once the program has been selected, the teams select the best teaching time (class vs. student contact), objectives, guidelines, and teaching strategies. Once this has been completed, the program is implemented. The teams monitor progress during team planning, and adjustments are made. Many programs end with a field trip or a research paper.

During the past few years the school has worked with the following programs:

- Study skills
- Research papers
- Energy/recycling and local government unit.

Many times the programs are not as large. Smaller programs include the following:

- Team-developed vocabulary and spelling words covering core area curriculums
- Literature covering specific periods in history
- Newspaper units dealing with current events
- Graph and chart development using core-area subjects.

The program has the following characteristics:

- It covers a wide range of subjects with all the core areas plus some unified arts.
- The programs range from major research projects to weekly kinds of activities.
- Programs are developed by teams and not implemented from above.
- Programs are run through regular class or in addition to the normal program called student contact.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *j*

Each academic team plans one major interdisciplinary unit each year. Themes have included: Immigration; the 1930s; the Constitution Era; and The Wild, Wild West. Related arts areas are included in the various activities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Smithtown Central School District
SCHOOL: Great Hollow Intermediate School
ADDRESS: Southern Blvd.
Nesconset, NY 11767
TELEPHONE: (516) 361-2565
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 560
CONTACT: Harry Ortgies, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The Publishing Activities Class (PAC), an interdisciplinary course currently offered as an elective to seventh-graders at Great Hollow Intermediate School, uses the latest in desktop publishing technologies to engage students in all phases of the writing process.

The course provides the opportunity for students to move through various stages of publishing as they create a news magazine that is distributed to students, teachers, and parents. Class activities provide students with "ownership" by allowing them to choose their own topics. This is consistent with currently recommended methodologies in writing instruction.

Desktop publishing allows students to see their work published in an attractive format, which encourages motivation and enthusiasm. Moreover, students are engaged in the cooperative learning process on a daily basis as they work together to brainstorm, research, draft, revise, and lay out their articles for publication.

The course fosters computer literacy and addresses the computer-related performance objectives of the Introduction to Technology Curriculum. The constants that are interdisciplinary links between technology education and other disciplines are also addressed on a daily basis.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

Included in the home and career skills 7th grade course is the "One of a Kind" program. This program deals with goal setting and developing a positive self-image. As a result of this program, students should have higher academic achievement and a lesser chance of substance abuse. The school psychologist works with the H/C Skills teachers and students.

Included in the grade 8 H/C Skills "mini" course is the "Discover Program," which is published by "ACT" (The American College Testing Program). This program provides an excellent foundation for career education and is a tremendous resource for individual career exploration. Guidance counselors work with the H/C Skills teachers and students.

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DISTRICT: Valley Stream Central High School
SCHOOL: Valley Stream North High School
ADDRESS: 750 Herman Avenue
Franklin Square, NY 11010
TELEPHONE: (516) 561-7903
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 690
CONTACT: Robert Alden, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: j

The REACH (Reading, English, and Computer Help) Program is a computer-based language arts program for mainstreamed seventh- and eighth-graders who, because of severe reading and written language deficiencies, would have difficulty succeeding in their academic subjects and in their overall adjustment to junior high school. In the REACH model, the remedial and developmental programs are one and the same; that is, they are perfectly congruent. Students in the REACH program move ahead in the developmental or regular which receiving remediation in specific skill areas. Skills, materials, techniques, and strategies are the same in the remedial and developmental programs. The REACH program incorporates the computer into every aspect of the students' language arts program. It is used to teach writing, to provide individualized reinforcement of reading skills, to study vocabulary, to reinforce material taught in the social studies and science classes, and to individualize spelling instruction.

A common planning is provided for teachers of English, social studies, mathematics and science. Through this common meeting time, teachers plan interdisciplinary programs with follow-up activities in each subject area. Some specific examples are:

- A day trip to Philadelphia: In mathematics, the student computes mileage, gasoline consumption, etc. In social studies, historic areas to be visited have been studied. In science, an activity concerning the museum visit is completed and the route, prior to leaving, is created. In English class, journal entries and teacher-created materials are completed.

- Studying the American Revolution (social studies) and reading Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes (English): The social studies teacher prepares the class for the historic aspects. In English class, the teacher coordinates writing activities that are relevant to the social studies class. Library visitations are made by both to do further work on the people and places of the time. Skits are created and acted out before the group, since back-to-back classes are scheduled.

The interdisciplinary approach also provides the counselor and the administrator responsible for discipline at this level the opportunity to meet with the teachers to coordinate guidance-related activities for individual students. Feedback to the counselor by the team members gives invaluable information regarding academic performance and/or suspected problem areas for individual students.

Students become aware of the articulation among the subjects. What is studied becomes relevant to many disciplines, not just to one.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4-6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: Emerson Junior High School
ADDRESS: 160 Bolmer Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10703
TELEPHONE: (914) 963-4567 Ext. 276
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 835
CONTACT: Charles D. Whelan, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *j*

With the advent of magnet program three years ago, the Emerson Junior High School has attempted to develop an intewrdisciplinary approach involving the English department, computer magnet program, and bilingual education program. Students develop journalistic ideas within their English or ESL classes and then in the computer classes use the ideas to develop some type of manuscript. Over the past three years, the school newspaper, school journal, and bilingual journal have all won 1st place awards in our local publication contests. English teachers and ESL teachers have had the pleasure of seeing their students work feverishly to produce these documents. The teamwork and continuity have excited students to work extra hard on the combined projects.

A goal for the 1989-90 school year is twofold in regard to interdisciplinary programs within the magnet framework. The computer magnet program is extending the concept of curriculum infusion into the social studies classes. Here, as in the English classes, students have the opportunity to explore areas of interest and complete the research project in the computer classes.

In the performing arts, the Emerson Junior High School has undertaken the same successful concept established above and, utilizing the resources of our artists-in-residence program, plans to create a new and more effective language arts and social studies program. The idea is to capitalize on the junior high school students' need for self-expression and peer recognition to infuse new ideas into the existing curriculum. Workshops are provided for all teachers involved in this process.

Students in transition, which is an accurate definition of middle-level-education students, are characterized by a need for active learning activities and a desire to explore and experiment. Curriculum infusion developed by teachers and artists in residence capitalizes on the active personality of students while at the same time providing them with peer recognition and ego satisfaction.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: John Burroughs Junior High School
ADDRESS: 150 Rockland Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
TELEPHONE: (914) 423-1804
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 800
CONTACT: Bernard Pierorazio, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: *j*

Burroughs has instituted interdisciplinary programs in three separate settings, two in magnets and one in a specialized program for students at risk. In the first program, Helping Services, teachers revised the standard districtwide curriculum, infusing themes relevant to the helping services professions and to volunteerism in all of the core curriculum areas. Thus, the main theme of altruism is studied in literature as a theme of short stories, in science as a motivating factor in research and discover, and in social studies as a requisite for the formation of communities. This simultaneous focus in three major areas provides an opportunity work on large projects relevant to at least two areas of academic study.

Global Perspectives, the second magnet, also had teachers infusing themes into the normal course of study. In so doing, the interdisciplinary approach went beyond the usual pairing of social studies and English, along with science and mathematics. For example, while students study the age of exploration in social studies, the mathematics teacher focuses problem solv-

ing on graphs that reflect the worldwide movement of populations. At the same time, the English teacher focuses on the literature of various groups involved in this period of history. Themes are used as the links between the various disciplines to unify the focus of the student's learning experience.

In the Stay-in-School Partnership Program, team teaching is used in mathematics, social studies, and English, with teams comprised of teachers from different disciplines; they work together throughout the year to provide interdisciplinary approaches to the standard curriculum. The English and social studies teachers relate their disciplines through reading and writing assignments in addition to simulations. English also links together with other disciplines such as hygiene and computers to provide assignments relevant to both areas of study.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

Area k

Instituting Cooperative Learning and/or Peer Tutoring Opportunities for Students

Cooperative learning and peer tutoring are effective instructional strategies for developing social and interpersonal skills in addition to academic proficiency. Practical models and examples of these two strategies are presented in this section.

Area k: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Bronxville Union Free School District
  Bronxville Middle School
- Community School District #9
  Diana Sands Intermediate School 147
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Hermon DeKalb Central School District
  Hermon DeKalb Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- Northport-East Northport Union Free School District
  Northport Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Rhinebeck Central School District
  Bulkeley Middle School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Wappingers Central School District
  Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
- Yonkers City Schools
  John Burroughs Junior High School

DISTRICT: Bronxville Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Bronxville Middle School
ADDRESS: 177 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
TELEPHONE: (914) 337-5600
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 234
CONTACT: John F. Kehoe, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Cooperative learning is present in our school. This technique works nicely in helping to teach students responsibility for not only their academics but also the instruction of their peers. With the existence of our advisor-advisee programs as well as our Project Adventure physical education component, our students are clearly involved in both their own as well as others' school life.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #9
SCHOOL: Diana Sands Intermediate School 147
ADDRESS: 1600 Webster Avenue
Bronx, NY 10457
TELEPHONE: (212) 294-9773
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** ,000
CONTACT: Julia Rivers-Jones

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

The "Partnership Program" encourages students to do more leisure time reading and has been well received by participants, teachers, and parents. The program makes learning to read fun.The goal of the Partnership Program is to provide a different approach to teaching reading. Students are used as tutors, tutees, and assigned to a mentor for one year. The enthusiasm of the participants is overwhelming. They voluntarily attend an after-school program (90 percent attendance) to learn how to use the computer to further enhance their program and plan for the following year. Research shows that the amount of leisure time reading is directly related to students reading comprehension and vocabulary size, and contribute to gains in reading ability.

Participants: *20 tutors* (10 students chosen from the 7th grade, 10 students chosen from the 8th grade).

20 tutees (10 students from a regular 6th grade class who read below the state reference point, 10 students from the Bilingual Program who are classified as Limited English Proficient).

10 student-mentors (students who were tutees as sixth-graders and are now in the 7th grade).

Location: Peer tutoring takes place in the school library two times a week for 40 minutes each session.

Program: *Peer Tutoring:* Each tutor is assigned a tutee. The tutor and tutee must sign a contract agreeing to come to school on a regular basis and meet twice a week. A teacher is assigned to each session as a resource person. A variety of teaching strategies are taught to the tutors prior to each session, i.e., cards are exchanged on special occasions; special trips are taken; telephone numbers are exchanged; work on school projects occurs as a team; auditorium presentations, skits, and poetry recitations are planned; breakfast or lunch is shared once a month with the principal.

Student-Mentor: The student is assigned to a staff member (a mentor) in the building to observe and perform assigned job duties. The student is responsible for maintaining a log of all activities. The student meets his or her mentor once a week for 40 minutes. The mentors are teachers, school secretary, guidance counselor, custodian, librarian, school nurse, and school dietician. All mentors are volunteers.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: k

Children helping children is the focus of the Mentor Program. Seventh and 8th grade students of Blue Mountain Middle School work with kindergarteners and 3rd or 4th grade classes of Buchanan-Verplanck Elementary School. Each year, one or more themes are chosen for special projects. In small groups students are involved in all of the language arts, which are correlated with other subject areas, such as social studies, research, music, art, home and careers, technology, physical education, word processing, etc. The key teachers (one from each grade level) invite other teachers and administrators to contribute their expertise; this broadens the base of instruction and staff involvement. Flexible scheduling of

time and rooms allows the elementary students the opportunity to visit the middle school, which happens several times during the course of a project. Students work together during a 70-minute block of time (activities module and lunch). Activities include: creating original poems, songs, puppet shows, and pop-up books and presenting them to an audience; recreating historically accurate scenes or replicas; working on a variety of art projects; designing a mentor logo and button; listening to and reading stories; word processing; singing; sewing; orienteering; and travelling to local sites that correlate with projects.

This exploratory experience gives middle school students a special opportunity to work as mentors with younger children. Interpersonal and social skills are nurtured as students work with "equals" from another age level. Respect for others and leadership qualities evolve during the year. Responsibility is a key factor as students work in small groups of mixed ages. They are involved in their own learning and actively participate in a variety of activities. The Mentor Program adds another dimension to students' lives as they work together academically and socially. It provides a special time during a very busy middle school schedule for students to develop individual talents and enjoy school.

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DISTRICT: Hermon DeKalb Central School District
SCHOOL: Hermon DeKalb
ADDRESS: DeKalb Junction, NY 13630
TELEPHONE: (315) 347-3442
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 120
CONTACT: Richard Nelson, Principal/Superintendent

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

A significant number of students in the middle school require support and/or remediation. The language arts/social studies/reading program is set up to use cooperative learning in an in-class setting. The organization and operation of this program have improved the overall skills of these students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Margery Casey, Math Department Chair

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

The Critical Thinking course is an interdisciplinary program taught by math, science, social studies, and English teachers. The objective of the course is to get students to think about their thinking and the many vehicles used to enhance their thinking. The students learn that everyone can become a better thinker; however, it takes practice. Some of the units included in this course that facilitate these objectives are:

- Study skills packet
- Newspaper unit
- Research project
- Logic puzzles, mind benders
- Computer games (logic).
- Reasoning skills - what makes a "good reason" vs a "bad reason.
- Recognizing misleading information
- Memory devices
- Challenging readings on some technical subjects such as memory, the brain
- Discussing levels of learning
- Discussing the differences between fact and opinion and cause and effect
- Playing detective (mysteries to be solved): inductive and deductive reasoning
- Probability - difference between probable and possible
- Creative approaches to find an answer such as designing their own island, inhabitants, etc
- Strategy - Caribou hunt
- Recognizing ambiguous vague statements, role of language
- Role of culture in learning and thinking.

The term "critical thinking" is a term that includes many kinds of thinking all at once. A person who thinks critically:

- Is openminded about new ideas
- Does not argue about something when he or she knows nothing about it
- Knows that people have different ideas about the meaning of words
- Tries to separate emotional thinking from logical thinking.
- Questions everything that doesn't make sense.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Mary Ellen Tower, 6th Grade Teacher
Vivian Pokrzyk, 6th Grade Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Cooperative learning techniques are used in a variety of ways. Peer partnering for rote practice is used for spelling and vocabulary. Tutoring teams are used for brainstorming and review of material. Jigsaw, a technique using "expert" groups and students as teachers, is used in content classes.

The policy statement calls for the use of cooperative learning groups under the heading, "Classroom Instruction."

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Many teachers are trying some forms of cooperative learning. Another approach to heterogeneous grouping have been to use the whole language approach, which in some cases has led to combining of two classes. The writing and reading process is also used. Students share their writing with each other, work on projects, and use peer editing and revision. Given a topic and certain criteria, i.e., the students choose their own books to read and are involved in a wide variety of literature types and styles. The program calls for total student involvement and a hands-on approach. Many times English reports, either written or oral, may tie in with other subject areas. For example, inventors, scientists, and mathematicians may be studied in math and science classes and then the report is written during English classes.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867
TELEPHONE: (607) 564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Senior High National Honor Society members work with middle school youngsters as tutors.

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DISTRICT: Northport-East Northport Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Northport Middle School
ADDRESS: Laurel Avenue
Northport, NY 11768
TELEPHONE: (516) 261-9000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 396
CONTACT: Martin Nadler, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Peer tutoring and peer leadership programs are ongoing at Northport Middle School. Acting as tutors and/or facilitative listeners, students assist other students. During the 1989-90 school year, the school trained students to become mediators in minor student disputes. The goals of this program include the provision of opportunities for students to assume responsibility for their own actions and to foster situations in which students become participants in the solution as well as in the creation of the problem.

Given the unique needs of the adolescent, there is a need for effective instructional strategies that enable youngsters to develop essential interpersonal skills. This model, using grades 6-8, enables youngsters to discuss problems, try out behaviors, and arrive at alternatives in preparation for decision making. It also enables the students to work cooperatively in resolving problems related to learning.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Oceanside Central School District
SCHOOL: Oceanside Middle School

ADDRESS: Alice & Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
TELEPHONE: (516) 678-1200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 810
CONTACT: Enid D'Arrigo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

One of the most exciting programs at the Oceanside Middle School is a student-initiated program of peer tutoring. Students from the gifted program, as part of an advanced future problem-solving component of their program, began to apply this process to the problems of the school. In their analysis, they arrived at the conclusion that they needed to reach those students who were most at risk in order to make the school a better place. After exploring all the possibilities that centered around punishments, they began to realize that punishment was not what these students needed. Out of this process arose a model for peer tutoring.

The program involves each student at risk being paired up with a student from the gifted program on the same academic team. These pairs meet weekly for one of three options. The first and predominant activity is weekly tutoring and review of team academic work. The second option involves backup by the Pupil Personnel Staff. The Pupil Personnel Staff work during these weekly meetings to offer groups for tutors, those tutored, and joint groups. This backup and enthusiastic support by the Pupil Personnel Staff are essential components of the program.

To facilitate relationships between the two disparate groups of students, an outdoor education experience was built into the program. This component of the program paired up potential tutors and tutorees as "buddies" facing a series of outdoor challenges (canoeing and orienteering). These experiences were designed to create a bond between students in a setting outside of the school building.

Too many middle school students find their classrooms too competitive and consequently "drop out" of learning. Peer tutoring is a way of helping youngsters find success and of assisting others in finding satisfaction in service to their peers. The process in place at Oceanside Middle School to implement a peer tutoring program also attempts to break down the barrier between the typical "groups" that exist at this educational level.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Rhinebeck Central School District
SCHOOL: Bulkeley Middle School
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 351
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
TELEPHONE: (914) 876-3075
GRADE SPAN: 6-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 173
CONTACT: Patricia Jatul, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

The Bulkeley Middle School has been using cooperative learning (the Johns Hopkins model) for three years. Currently, cooperative learning is used in the 6th grade mathematics program, the 6th grade social studies and science programs, and the 7th grade social studies program. Three teachers have attended advanced training in this program. Cooperative learning has enabled the school to successfully move from homogeneous to heterogeneous instructional groups.

Techniques that enable teachers to deal successfully with a wide range of abilities within one class are needed as middle-level schools move from tracking practices that have proved to be inequitable. Cooperative learning improves academic outcomes while developing important social and personal skills."

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

The South Huntington Union Free School District has a very active Students Against Drunk Driving group at both the junior and senior high levels. As part of a peer pressure program, the high school SADD members visit the junior high students in their health classes. The junior and senior high students take a class period and discuss how they perceive alcohol and drug problems. The younger students are definitely impressed by the older students.

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DISTRICT: Wappingers Central School District
SCHOOL: Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
ADDRESS: 15 Myers Corners Road
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

TELEPHONE: (914) 298-3610
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 ENROLLMENT: Not reported
CONTACT: Roberta Rinaldo, Coordinator of Special Projects

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Each of the two middle-level schools in the district has approximately 20 teachers trained or being trained in cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson). They are in the process of implementing what they have learned, and some are also involved in pilot interdisciplinary teams. Many of these teachers have completed or are in the process of completing the learning styles training. Cooperative learning and styles are a good combination. Wappingers is a relatively traditional school system. Cooperative learning assists in making the transition to heterogeneous grouping at the middle level.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: John Burroughs Junior High School
ADDRESS: 150 Rockland Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
TELEPHONE: (914) 423-1804
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 ENROLLMENT: 800
CONTACT: Bernard Pierorazio, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: k

Burrough's Stay-In-School Partnership Program has two fine examples of the benefits of cross-age tutoring. In the first instance, college students from the College of New Rochelle come into classrooms and work with small groups or individual students. Since many of these tutors are minority students and/or inner city students themselves, they act as excellent role models for the at-risk students targeted in the Partnership Program. In order to enhance the bonds formed among the students and tutors, Partnership students visit the college where they meet their tutors, tour the grounds with them, are taught several mini-lessons by college teachers, and begin to see college as a viable option for their own educational future.

The second use of cross-age tutoring involves 8th grade partnership students tutoring 1st through 3rd graders in a local elementary school. There has been a marked improvement in the attendance of those students who act as tutors to younger children, as well as an improvement in attitude and behavior. The program provides an excellent opening, in the form of training and processing, for work on interpersonal and communication skills and allows students not just to interact with those younger than themselves but also to work with the teacher to whose class they are assigned. Participants enjoy being positive role models and, by working with children in lower grade levels on 1st through 3rd grade materials, are able to do work that reinforces their own academic skills levels.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

Area I

Planning and Implementing Exploratory Experiences for Middle-Level Students

Middle-level students need opportunities to explore new subject areas, pursue personal interests, develop individual talents, and investigate potential futures and careers. Models and examples of programs that provide such exposure are described in this section.

Area I: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Amherst Central School District
  Amherst Middle School
- Community School District #18
  Meyer Levin Intermediate School 285
- Community School District #22
  Shell Bank Intermediate School 14
- Community School District #27
  Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
- Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
  Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
- Diocese of Rochester
  Holy Cross School
- Elwood Union Free School District
  Elwood Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Islip Union Free School District
  Islip Middle School
- Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
  Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
- Kings Park Central School District
  Williams T. Rogers Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Lyons Central School District
  Lyons Central Jr.-Sr. High School
- Miller Place Union Free School District
  North Country Road School
- Nardin Academy
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- North Tonawanda City School District
  Dr. Thaddeus F. Reszel Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Oswego City School District
  Oswego Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Penfield Central School District
  Bay Trail Middle School
- Port Jefferson Union Free School District
  Port Jefferson Junior High School
- Riverhead Central School District
  Riverhead Middle School
- Rye City School District
  Rye Middle School
- Schenectady City School District
  Steinmetz Middle School
- Skaneateles Central School District
  Skaneateles Middle School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Yonkers City Schools
  John Burroughs Junior High School

DISTRICT: Amherst Central School District
SCHOOL: Amherst Middle School
ADDRESS: 55 Kings Highway
Amherst, NY 14226
TELEPHONE: (716) 836-3000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Anton C. Schwarzmueller, Principal
Diane Eklund Klein, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Considerable focus is being placed on early career exploration during the middle school years. The Business Lunch Program at Amherst Middle School is an opportunity for students to gain some insight into various jobs by talking informally with people from different fields. Guest speakers are invited to talk briefly to groups of students about their jobs and careers thus far, what they thought about doing in middle school, and their education/experience as it relates to jobs/careers.

Seventh and 8th grade students are surveyed to determine which occupations they are interested in and would like to hear a guest speaker discuss. The home/career skills classes tally the results to determine which occupations are the most popular. A person is invited to be a guest and talk to the interested students about his or her career. The lunches take place about once every three weeks. Approximately 20-25 students participate at each lunch for approximately one hour.

The Business Lunch Program is but one aspect in career exploration, but it does provide a "live link" to the world of work, not for early career decision, but for early career exploration. It also helps 7th and 8th grade students become more aware of the opportunities in today's world of work and to see that right now, education is their work.

The Amherst Middle School program includes a number of 10-week electives designed to offer a range of exploratory experiences to 7th and 8th graders. Seventh graders not involved in a major music organization (band, orchestra, chorus) may choose two electives. Eighth graders not involved in a major music organization may choose up to five electives but must take at least two electives. Those involved in a major music organization may choose one elective. The electives are listed below, and a brief description of each is available.

- Computer Literacy
- Creative Writing
- Human Relations
- Laboratory Techniques
- Living Skills
- You and the Law

Students are graded S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory) for participation in electives. Little homework is given, and the emphasis is on class participation and hands-on activities. Every effort is made to accommodate student preferences in the assignment of electives.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE:

Business Lunch - 3 years
Electives - 6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

DISTRICT: Community School District #18
SCHOOL: Meyer Levin Intermediate School 285
ADDRESS: 5905 Beverly Road
Brooklyn, NY 11203
TELEPHONE: (718) 451-2200
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1405
CONTACT: Edie Gentile, Director

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Located in the East-Flatbush section of Brooklyn and celebrating its 12th anniversary, the Mayer Levin Performing Arts Center is an in-school and after-school arts program staffed by professionals that offers community children (many of whom pursue careers in the arts), training in drama, vocal music, instrumental music, scenic design, costume design, business management, and dance. The center presents various choral and orchestral recitals, dramatic and dance presentations, and a major production in May combining all disciplines. Productions include: "The Wiz," "Pippin," "Annie," "Anything Goes," "Good News," "Barnum," "Hello, Dolly!," "Guys and Dolls," "My One and Only," "The Tap Dance Kid," "Oliver!."

The center's schedule includes performances at Tottenville High School; Kingsboro Community College; Hershey Park, PA; School District #18; Brooklyn Boro Hall; City Hall; The Brooklyn Museum; Brooklyn College; Wykoff House Museum; Trinity Church of Manhattan; and The Concord Hotel of New York. The Performing Arts Center has also branched out into the community with performances at the Schulman Center of Brookdale Hospital, Senior Citizen Centers in Canarsie and East-Flatbush, and District #18 elementary organizations. The center has also worked for the 67th precinct youth and senior organizations as a part of its performance.

The Meyer Levin Performing Arts Center is a not-for-profit organization that exists through various fund raisers, performances, District #18 funds, and private donations.

The center has been recognized by the Rockefeller Brothers' Foundation as one of the nation's top 10 arts programs. The center is the recipient of a special proclamation by the Council of the City of New York for its cultural and social contributions.

The center has also been awarded special magnet school status in New York City for the performing arts and can now accept students from anywhere within the borough of Brooklyn. The center plans to reach out to more community people.

The center also emphasizes careers in the performing arts. Education in theatre management is often overlooked because people tend to judge drama solely by productions, the actors becoming the focal point of theater. However, students learn that many vocations result from theatre-related activities. Through a carefully planned theater curriculum, students can achieve important career objectives that include individual development, self-expression, improved social attitudes, and evaluation skills, while learning theater management skills. In drama, students find the opportunity to develop and apply problem-solving techniques. As members of a production unit, students learn to work cooperatively with others. They join a team effort to cope with the many problems they face.

The following nonperformance skills are developed in the performing arts program: management skills, including box office and reservations, mailing lists, ticket exchange and refunds; i.e. accounting skills, budgets, income forecasts, reports on income and attendance, summaries, requisitions, purchase orders, and invoices.

Trips to the Metropolitan Opera House allow students to see the actual backstage workings of a show as well as experience the working final rehearsal of a full-scale opera.

The development of a playbill adds to hands-on experience. Students organize the book, solicit funds for the development of ads, collate the ads, restrict themselves to a working budget, and involve themselves in a community project as they "sell" the program to prospective businesses. Relations with community groups such as The Brookdale Hospital Samuel Schulman Institute fosters awareness of the special needs of the elderly.

Performing arts is an area that explores experiences for students that would ordinarily remain unrealized. While providing students with one of the most comprehensive performing arts programs in the city, Meyer Levin Intermediate School maintains strict academic standards. The program was developed within the school by a dedicated staff of teachers. It was not the result of a district program already in existence. The program was built to serve the needs of the students and community.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

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DISTRICT: Community School District #22
SCHOOL: Shell Bank Intermediate School 14
ADDRESS: 2424 Batchelder Street
Brooklyn, NY 11235
TELEPHONE: (718) 743-0220
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1217
CONTACT: Aaron Friedman, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: 1

The Law Program at Shell Bank is a unique and exciting educational experience, and students eagerly participate. Through simulations, role playing, and small group work, students gain insights into how to solve problems, make decisions, and resolve conflicts. Movies, video tapes, and original scripts help students at Shell Bank recognize what rights are guaranteed and how people influence the way laws are made. Guest speakers and lecturers assist students in understanding the functions of the police, lawyers, and law-makers. The consumer law unit allows students to create their own products, write advertisements to sell them, and even have their commercials videotaped. Trips to court, City Hall, and the Policy Academy give students direct experience of the importance of law in a democratic society.

Sixth grade law classes begin their year understanding the relationship between values and laws good citizens are people who think and care about the consequences of their actions. Students also learn that the decisions they make in life are based on their values and affect the lives of others. Seventh and eighth grade students explore the legal ramifications of true-to-life situations. The teacher, a practicing attorney, uses case studies to teach students how laws work and, more importantly, what they really mean.

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #27
SCHOOL: Rockaway Beach Junior High School 180
ADDRESS: 320 Beach 104 Street
Rockaway Beach, NY 11694
TELEPHONE: (718) 945-2700
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 1,000
CONTACT: Ilana Block, Scholar Research Institute

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The *Scholar Research Institute* at JHS 180Q affords its students the opportunity to explore many areas of interest with the assistance of teacher/mentors who have expertise in these areas. One period per day is devoted to small-group and/or independent investigation. A flexible, rotating schedule permits every student to engage in an introductory research experience with every teacher. After several exposures, during which students acquire research skills and apply these skills by completing "mini-projects," the students are given time to discuss and evaluate their learning experiences. At this point,

each student determines which area of research he/she might want to explore in greater depth, and a contract is drawn up between a chosen mentor and the student. The exploratory experiences have included scientific experimentation, interaction with outside professionals, and creative media work used to demonstrate the outcomes of research.

The difficult task of carving small-group instruction time out of a middle school program has proven to be well worth the effort. The opportunity for teachers and students to relate in an alternative style through the *Scholar Research Institute* research period each day has strengthened student confidence and willingness to explore and take risks.

The mentorship role has provided teachers the forum for engendering excitement and enthusiasm about subjects in which they have long been interested. Together, students and teachers have made discoveries about learning styles, alternative methods of presenting findings, and technological advances in many fields of study. The classroom as laboratory has been effective because of small numbers, student interest, and renewed teacher enthusiasm.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Croton-Harmon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School
ADDRESS: Larkin Place
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
TELEPHONE: (914) 271-2191
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 285
CONTACT: Joseph Zajac, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Independent Study Program (I.S.P.) at Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School was designed in 1982 in response to a growing desire among the faculty to more fully address the needs of highly motivated students who sought challenges beyond those provided in the basic middle school program.

A primary concern of teachers involved in designing this program was a philosophical adherence to the principle of heterogeneous grouping. Research into programs for the gifted and talented eventually led to the work of Renzulli, and many of his theories and ideas were adapted and incorporated into I.S.P. The I.S.P. is intended to be open to any student who seeks enrichment experiences, demonstrates creativity, and possesses the task commitment to undertake additional voluntary responsibilities. The program does not seek to identify or label "gifted" students and provides an open door for any student who wishes to reach beyond the parameters of the middle school program.

The program is designed to provide students with the time, space, and resources to undertake enrichment experiences. Project ideas may be generated by students or suggested by teachers. Teachers encourage all students to undertake independent study and help to organize and design projects to suit the individual student. Teachers act as mentors and as resources in areas of their own expertise. In addition, teachers help connect students with members of the community who can serve as resources for their projects.

Since the inception of the I.S.P., students have undertaken a variety of projects including: redesigning of the school parking lot to accommodate more vehicles, researching a broad range of careers, creating a school Newsteam that publishes a regular newsletter and acts as a liaison to local newspapers and district publications, serving as assistants for special projects in the elementary school, and writing a descriptive essay of Croton today for inclusion in a time capsule to be opened in the year 2089. The scope and nature of the independent study projects may be broadened or reduced to accommodate the abilities, ambitions and limitations of individual students. Projects may be individual or may be undertaken by groups of any size. The flexibility of the Independent Study Program is its greatest strength and makes it adaptable to the needs of virtually any school or community.

The Independent Study Program was designed to maximize heterogeneous grouping of students, without resorting to labeling, tracking, or pulling students out of regular classes in order to attend special enrichment programs. Students undertake projects that instill self-confidence, develop important skills, and enhance their educational experience. At the same time, students make connections and partnerships with their peers, their teachers, and their neighbors in the community.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 7 years

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DISTRICT: Diocese of Rochester
SCHOOL: Holy Cross School
ADDRESS: 4488 Lake Avenue
Rochester, NY 14612
TELEPHONE: (716) 663-6533
GRADE SPAN: Preschool-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 446
CONTACT: Sandy Garcia, Talent Pool Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Talent Pool Enrichment Program provides opportunities for individuals and small groups to pursue topics of interest and talents outside of the regular classroom setting. Based on the Revolving Door Identification Model developed by Joseph S. Renzulli, Sally M. Reis, and Linda H. Smith, The

Talent Pool allows children at all grade levels to participate in enrichment activities suited to their particular interests. At the suggestion of a teacher or parent, a student or small group of students meets with the Talent pool teacher once a week for approximately one-half hour. The meeting time is spent discussing interests and special abilities and talents, exploring ideas for possible projects, and carrying the ideas through to project completion. Often some of the work is done in the regular classroom when assignments are finished at a time agreeable to the classroom teacher. The special projects may be long- or short-term, lasting anywhere from one month to an entire school year. Depending upon need, a child may remain in the program from September to June, exploring many topics and completing several different projects. Finished products are always shared in some way. They may be displayed in halls or library, read to other students or classes, or performed for a student audience. Ultimately, they are taken home to be shared with parents and family. Many times a student will request inclusion in the Talent Pool. This request is always considered, although a child must be capable of handling the work covered during missed classroom time. If that criterion poses a problem, a short-term, in-classroom project can be designed to meet the individual's needs. The Talent Pool teacher also oversees the Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary Schools and the Accelerated Reader in order to offer varied enrichment activities to a broad range of students.

This program is relatively simple to implement, but more importantly it has very successfully met a variety of needs within a broad student ability range. It has contributed to student academic growth as well as to the growth of the student as the unique person he or she is.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Elwood Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Elwood Middle School
ADDRESS: 478 Elwood Road
East Northport, NY 11731
TELEPHONE: (516) 266-5420
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 445
CONTACT: Arthur Strassle, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Once Elwood adopted a Grade 6-7-8 grade level middle school configuration, the opportunities to develop new directions became much more feasible.
Elwood Middle School has recently developed three new courses:

- Grade 6 Study Skills is a 10-week course required of all sixth-graders. Many activities have been developed to teach our objectives. A three-week segment is team-taught in library by librarian and an English teacher. The culminating activity is an individualized 3-5 page paper and subsequent oral presentation to peers.
- Career Awareness. Career Orientation is a 10-week course for all eighth-graders; five weeks is taught by Home/Careers teacher with Guidance input and five weeks by a Technology teacher. Curriculum objectives and topics are attached. Culminating activity is the building of a multi-function robotic arm by each pair of students. Those in dialogue on a variety of job types, specific paths of preparations, changes in the future job market, and a look at high-technology careers.
- Issues, Events and Personalities of the '60s, '70s and '80s is a 10-week course involving all eighth-graders that capitalizes on Social Studies teacher frustration at never having adequate time to complete the syllabus and the fact that current eighth graders' parents lived through the past three decades. A focus on learning, sharing and evaluating the issues of the last thirty years is provided.

The Study Skills, Career Awareness-Career Orientation, and Issues, Events, and Personalities of the 60's, 70's, and 80's are. Courses that were teacher-developed and "fleshed out" during summer projects. Student receptivity has been good and staff evaluation is that productivity is positive and rewarding.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE: Study Skills - 3 years
Other Courses - 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Project Adventure

Project Adventure is part of the Blue Mountain Middle School's winter physical education curriculum. It emphasizes the development of balance, coordination, agility, decision-making skills, and cooperation, all in a comfortable, supportive class climate. There are four parts to Project Adventure: New

Games, Initiative Problems, Low Elements, and High Elements.

"New games" involve all class participants in fun games such as "Everyone's It Tag" where no one wins and no one loses. This helps to eliminate the "no fun" feeling of physical education and helps bring the students together for the next part of the class, which is the "initiative problems." Students are presented with problems that require their physical and mental cooperation as a group to solve. The attempts and results are often fun, creative, and an integral part of the process of solving problems. They also increase the group members' awareness of each other and improve support of each other's abilities.

The "low elements" include activities in which a relay line is not needed. However, a spotting technique is taught and used. The activities include things such as the tightrope walk, swinging tires, and the wild log ride. Each challenges the physical rather than the mental abilities of each student although the "know how" is necessary to complete the task successfully. Finally the "high elements" are a series of ropes, ladders, platforms, and the trapeze jump, all of which challenge both physical and mental abilities of the individual. The "attempt" is emphasized by teacher as well as by fellow classmates. Success is not the ultimate goal. A strengthened self-image emerges as the student attempts a second and third time, each time getting closer to the ultimate goal. The students eventually recognize that persistence is more valued than performance. As a result, the confidence level increases tremendously in all students.

The inclusion of Project Adventure and New Games activities into the physical education program has enabled the staff to regroup the students to offer exploratory experiences and team-oriented sports. This approach is one of the many ways in which students are assisted in building their self-confidence and increasing their self-esteem. Throughout all activities, the power of peer pressure is turned into a positive motivating force that gets the students to try things they never thought they could do. Although no student is forced to do something in which he or she feels uncomfortable, most develop an inner courage to try, and whether an action is completed or not is unimportant. Students support each other in all they do, and this forges new interpersonal relationships that would not otherwise occur.

Throughout its history at the middle school, students have looked forward to this unit where the class size is smaller and greater individual attention can be given by teacher and fellow students. The program builds life skills and acts as a catalyst for extending student self-confidence into other areas of the educational program; instead of saying "I can't", students say, "I'll give it a try." It has also given those students who may normally shine in athletics or some other class a chance to demonstrate strengths that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Circus Arts

Circus arts was introduced to Blue Mountain Middle School during the 1988-89 school year. The purpose of the program is threefold: first, to improve balance; second, to improve coordination (hand/eye as well as foot/eye) and agility; and third, to concentrate on individual skill rather than on who "won" and who "lost."

The variety of activities included in the unit helps to keep the students' interest. Juggling, pole balancing, spinning plates, and devil sticks are the four activities that are emphasized, with the hopes of introducing unicycles within the next three years.

Students are given a chance to explore their abilities relative to each task. A tremendous amount of pride exudes from each child as he or she persists in succeeding at each of the four activities. As a result, a more confident, happy child develops, and physical education is fun.

The circus arts program is an example of how exploratory experience can match the developmental and interest levels of the students. The activities encountered tap into the childhood love of the circus while challenging the physical development and coordination of the children. The program also offers them a unique opportunity to participate in an activity that they will in all likelihood not participate in again. In addition, it leads to a greater appreciation for those activities encountered in life that need coordination, balance, and perseverence to complete. By stressing the noncompetitive aspect of physical education, the circus arts program enhances students' sense of self-esteem and self-confidence.

Language Arts

Blue Mountain has instituted a program that is taught during a module known as the Language Arts module. This is not to be confused with the English module, which all students experience each day. During the Language Arts module, every student participates in the equivalent of a half year of instruction that encompasses the following areas: developmental or remedial reading; computer literacy with a focus on word processing and database management; a locally developed research skills unit; and listening/speaking skills. Since this is a three-year program, each year's activities spiral, curriculum-wise, into the next. These same skills are then applied in the academic classes throughout the student's middle school experience. In addition to the above, there is a component in the 6th grade known as "Super Student Study Skills," which assists students with their organizational and basic study skills.

All of these areas mentioned are essential life skills for the students. Because we assign a part of our schedule to Language Arts, students also recognize the module's importance. This program enables the classroom teacher to integrate the areas taught into the lessons and activities conducted in all of the other disciplines, and the students then see the interrelatedness

of learning and the practicality of learning these skills and concepts.

Outdoor Residency Experience

Every 7th grade student at the Blue Mountain Middle School participates in either the fall or spring in a 3-night, 4-day outdoor residency experience held off the school grounds. The experience is led, taught, and supervised entirely by the teaching staff; it is also organized around the theme of the Iroquois way of life. Students are assigned to clans and tribes, and this serves as the basis for table arrangements at meals and many of the activities that occur inside of the classes. All activities, courses, and evening programs are based on the Iroquois theme. During the course of the four days, students participate in seven different classes in small groups, where the class make-up is constantly rearranged to foster the development of new friendships. Evening activities include a special movie, a naturalist, a singer, and a Confederacy meeting held around a fire where the students make recommendations through their Pine Tree and Confederacy Chiefs to the Skypeople.

This program is important because it utilizes the outdoor setting to integrate instruction into a meaningful whole. While doing this, it also attends to many social and interpersonal needs that the students have. While studying the environment from the perspective of the Iroquois, the students not only interact with each other in a different manner than in the confines of the school, but they also interact with staff similarly. The program fosters individual and group responsibility, which can be reinforced when the students return to school. Finally, students acquire skills and knowledge that can be used in the future in school or in their personal life.

The program is unique in that everything has been developed by the teachers. There are no specialists who teach courses, parents do not supervise the cabins at night, nor does the administration organize the week. It is completely run by the teaching staff. Another strong point is that teachers from all disciplines participate from 1-4 days, while substitutes cover classes back at school.

MOVAPA

During two time periods known as Music Supplement, students in 6th grade and then in 7/8 leave their teams to participate in this performing group. MOVAPA is an acronym for Music of the Vocal and Performing Arts. In place of a traditional chorus, there is a 6th grade MOVAPA group and a combined 7/8 MOVAPA group. Both are merged when performances are given. Basically, this is a course of study that is open to students who choose to participate during the school day. Over a three-year period, it emphasizes instruction in the singing and speaking voice, reading music, acting and reading libretti, musical theater, creating musical and/or choral performances, scenery painting, prop construction, and costume assemblage. Performances of the group occur for the student body during the day and for the community during the evening.

This program is not a traditional choral program, and because of the diversity of experiences available to the students, it is able to attend to the talents, strengths, and weaknesses of the students. All students are able to be involved in a manner that capitalizes on their individual abilities, and this also contributes to the building of self-esteem. In addition, because of the manner in which it is offered, participation ranges (when the two groups are combined) in any given year from 1/6 to 1/4 of the student body. It is a program that has broad community support and is an excellent vehicle for bringing recognition to the students and the school when performances occur.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE:

Project Adventure - 5 years
Circus Arts - 2 years
Language Arts - 10 years
Outdoor Residency Program - 23 years
MOVAPA - 12 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Islip Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Islip Middle School
ADDRESS: 21 Main Street
Islip, NY 11751
TELEPHONE: (516) 581-2560
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 886
CONTACT: Frank Darzano, Technology Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Islip Middle School Technology Education Program is a promising technology program for several reasons. First, the traditional unit metal and wood shops have been dismantled and converted to multipurpose technology labs. Second, the students are receiving learning experiences in all 10 of the modules in the state syllabus, "Introduction to Technology." Third, a grant that provided for $4,500 worth of Lego/Logo equipment will increase the ability to provide instruction in control technology at the 7th and 8th grade level and increase the use of the seven computers in our labs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Linda Adsitt, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Even though the school day officially ends at 2:45 p.m., many students remain after school until 4:05 p.m. The school district runs a late bus at 4:15 four days a week to transport students home. The parent/teacher organization promotes an extracurricular program in addition to many school-sponsored clubs and sports-related activities. Each semester, students may select among a variety of interest areas.

During the past three years, the following courses have been offered:

Hair and Skin Care	Cheerleading
Electronics	Water Safety
Ceramics	Signing
Chess	Karate
Crafts	Photography
Self-Defense for Girls	Babysitting
Baseball Memorabilia-Collecting	Kidseams
Goju	Leatherworking
Aerobics	Dance
Keyboarding	

The adult supervision is either a teacher or community person with expertise in a certain field. Many of the courses are filled to capacity each time and therefore offered year after year.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Carmella Mantaro, Enrichment Teacher
Renee Solow, English Department Chair

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The overall objective of the children's literature in the language arts project is implementation of the New York State Education Department's *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, integrating the communicational arts—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—in grades 5-8. Groups participating in the month-long theme are: gifted and talented, grades 5 and 6, reading and English/language arts, and technology education along with the media center as the focal point during the celebration. In addition, the Jamesville-DeWitt Syracuse University Teacher Center and the Parent/Teacher Group join in as support groups to the overall project.

Focus of the project is the work of a specific author (e.g., Paula Danziger and Gordon Korman). The Media Center purchases and has available a number of the author's works. Teachers of reading/language arts receive biographical information and a copy of a book by the author to read aloud. The visit by the author is the culminating activity. The Parent/Teacher Group sponsors and organizes a book fair during the week of the author's appearance. The author spends unscheduled time in the Media Center to visit with students in an informal way.

Students in the 5th and 6th grade Gifted and Talented program correspond with the author, imparting information about the school, community, and interests of the students. Analyses of themes and style are one phase of the unit.

The visit of the author for a full day is seen as the next phase of the unit. The author's discussion of his or her writing with children at each grade level serves as an interactive model for writing. The 6th grade Gifted and Talented Program students write stories. The author touches on the process of becoming "a published author." The children submit their own original manuscripts to Landmark Editions, a young authors contest, following the company's guidelines.

Other aspects of communication arts have been developed to emphasize children's literature in the language arts and highlighting an author.

- As part of the regular 8th grade communications model for technology education, a videotaped interview of the author is produced by the students. Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School has a full color, multi-faceted television production studio. It is believed to be the only such studio for this age group in the state. Equipment is studio quality: three color TV cameras, a switcher, and an audio mixer. Students are involved with total production of the on-camera interview. They are responsible for script, concept development, research (the author's work), graphic generation, and appropriate music selection. On-camera interviewing techniques are studied. The videotape produced becomes part of the Media Center's library of videotapes.
- The J-D S.U. Teacher Center incorporates inservice work with the staff. A dinner meeting/workshop with author and teachers of reading, language arts, English, and sup-

port services for grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 is made possible through a Teacher Center grant. The author discusses his or her writing along with the interactive model to be used with students the following day. A videotape of the author's interaction with all the students becomes another resource for follow-up sessions.

- Finally, a cooperative project, "Authors Alive," with eighth-graders at Manlius Pebble Hill School, a private day school, is developed during this time block (described elsewhere).

The children's literature in the language arts program is an extension of the multifaceted language arts program in the Middle School. Parents, students and teachers are all involved in planning this program. Other disciplines like the technology department are included in the actual activities with the author. The students are very impressed with the author's recollection of his or her own "middle school" career.

This 8th grade project, "Authors Alive," is a collaboration of three teachers from three different school districts, although it could be developed intrascholastically or managed by one teacher in one classroom. The nearby surburban schools participating in this unit are a small private school, Manlius-Pebble Hill; and two middle schools, Wellwood and Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School. "Authors Alive," a month long unit, is intended to promote in-depth knowledge and understanding of some important authors through students' individual research and through their sharing with other students. The components of the unit are:

- Book/author talks by the librarian and teachers
- A review of resources by the librarian; a review of researching techniques (bibliography, note taking) by teachers
- An exploratory trip to downtown, local, and school libraries after each student has made a choice from a selected list of annotated books and authors
- The research of an author's life and reading of one or more of that author's books
- The writing of a response log that records reactions to reading
- The writing of a speech about the author of choice
- The delivery of that speech to own classmates
- Taking notes on each speaker
- An open notebook test on authors from facts reported in the individual speeches
- The designing of T-shirts that exemplify an important aspect of an author and/or the author's work (or, the assembly and modeling of a representative costume. The art teacher participants here by teaching the elements of good design and has already participated in instructing about how to sketch an author.)
- The Culminating Activity takes place when students meet for an Authors Convention at one of the schools, dressed in their T-shirts and ready to share information about their authors with other eighth-graders. They meet in genre groups led by juniors and seniors who have been prepared to direct the discussion of literary concerns. After the discussion sessions, students, leaders, and teachers have lunch together and regroup to attend an Honors Ceremony in which the best T-shirts and discussion participants are honored.
- Students write an evaluation of the project.

NUMBER OF YERAS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Joan B. Pierson, Home and Career Skills Teacher, Chairman of Special Area Programs

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: I

The 8th grade home and career skills class includes a computer program entitled "Choices Junior" as a culminating activity for the Career Planning module. The program allows students to be introduced to the process of career exploration. They can respond to a 120-item checklist regarding job-related activities. Through their response to these items, they can get a feeling for how they would relate to various career fields.

Also through this computer program students can explore career fields according to their tentative educational plans. The computer program will list career fields that are most suited to the level of education they hope to attain.

Another way of using the program is to have students select their favorite school subjects and let the program show them career fields that may be of interest to them.

When the students are ready to explore career fields using this program, they will find many careers to investigate. Information they can find out about a career includes: education required, general interests of people in the field, working conditions, personality of individuals, lifestyle of people in this group, money they might expect to earn, school subjects to take as background, and general ability levels necessary for this career.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Kelly Curtis Bonner, ADA/PEP Counselor, Alcohol/Drug Abuse Prevention Education Program

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: I

The Drug Quiz Show was developed by an ADA-PEP counselor, Debrah Shulman, Ph.D., at Jamesville-DeWitt. Students sign up as a team (four per team) to participate. They are given pamphlets of information to study relating to drug and alcohol abuse. Questions drawn from these pamphlets are asked of students in a game show format. Winners advance through a play-off system culminating in a final play-off.

Middle school students need to be challenged and allowed the opportunity to practice and improve many important and essential skills. The Drug Quiz Show allows work in many skill areas including:

- Decision making
- Leadership
- Communication
- Group work.

In today's world, drug education is a must. The Drug Quiz Show provides drug education in a format that students choose to participate in and that enables them to learn drug information and have fun.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District
SCHOOL: Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
ADDRESS: Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
TELEPHONE: (315) 445-8360
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 627
CONTACT: Ellen B. Andrews, Intramural Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: I

The school day at the Middle School ends at 2:45 p.m. A 4:15 p.m. late bus schedule encourages after-school participation in the Intramural Program. A wide variety of activities are offered:

Soccer
Flag football
Free swim
Synchronized swim (We have an annual Swim Show each spring.)
Basketball (before and after school)
Volleyball
Cross-country skiing (We provide equipment.)
Gymnastics (before and after school)
Archery
Tennis
Lacrosse
Softball.

The activities are run by physical education teachers, classroom teachers, and coaches. Older students (seventh- and eighth-graders) are encouraged to work with or help younger (fifth- and sixth-graders) participants. Those student tutors enjoy the opportunity to help their coaches or teachers *and* to share their knowledge with newcomers to the sport.

The percentage of students participating in the Intramural Program has increased annually. Information sheets go home with students regularly telling them *and* their parents: 1) the activities being offered, 2) when each meets, and 3) other pertinent details. There are monthly schedules posted in each homeroom, a daily posting of activities on our Intramural Bulletin Board, and announcements regarding intramurals made at the end of each school day.

The Intramural Program at Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School is aimed at all students. It allows youngsters to participate in a sport or activity of his or her choosing. Any student may and is encouraged to participate in the programs. It offers a great opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships as it brings everyone (ages and skill levels) together. Youngsters can learn new skills without pressure and become proficient at a new activity or improve existing skill levels. Participation in intramurals is a privilege. Youngsters are accountable for their behavior.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 23 years

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DISTRICT: Kings Park Central School District
SCHOOL: William T. Rogers Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Dock Road
Kings Park, NY 11754
TELEPHONE: (516) 269-3270

GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 970
CONTACT: George Duffy, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The William T. Rogers Middle School has successfully extended some 7th and 8th grade special subject requirements to grades 5 and 6. Sixth-graders receive a one-quarter of unit of technology, a one-quarter unit of home and careers, and a one-half unit of health.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Patricia Loncto and Gail McMahon, Home and Career Skills Teachers
Mary Lou Armstrong, 8th Grade English Teacher
Ronald Danielwicz, 8th Grade English Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

A committee consisting of teachers, parents, and experts from the community developed an interdisciplinary family life curriculum to be used in our middle school for grades 6, 7 and 8. The curriculum stresses personal development (to discover an awareness of self and relationships with others), family life issues (to discuss the physiological, psychological, and social facts and attitudes of human development that will support responsible personal behavior), personal and family life resource management (to develop consumer skills in money management, nutrition, clothing, and personal environment management), career planning (to explore an overview of work, career influences on family life, tentative plans, and entrepreneurship). The program utilizes a variety of instructional strategies that are applied through specified student-centered activities. The curriculum calls for all teachers to provide active support for instruction involving the family life program components. However, the home and careers teachers take primary responsibility for the program through their 6th, 7th, and 8th grade courses of study. They are also the primary initiators in terms of program articulation and modification. The family life curriculum involves students in their learning and encourages a sense of respect and a feeling of self-worth. Students are provided opportunities to examine, explore, discuss, and understand the changes associated with early adolescence.

Under the umbrella of "enrichment," students are provided the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of programs, ranging from remedial to gifted in content, and from academic to social in nature. The enrichment program replaces the concept of study hall and allows students to learn through rewarding, creative, hands-on experiences. Enrichment classes utilize "pools" of students available during specific periods each day. Enrichment offerings encompass such topics as the study of literature, Origami, survival skills, computer programming, computer repair, chess instruction, and remedial math. Activities may involve visitations, winter campouts, or assistance in elementary schools. Program content is based upon student need as determined by grade-level teams and may last only a few weeks or continue for the entire school year. No students participate in "elite" programs; instead, they are part of the schoolwide enrichment program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3-5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lyons Central School District
SCHOOL: Lyons Central Jr.-Sr. High school
ADDRESS: 10 Clyde Road
Lyons, NY 14489
TELEPHONE: (315) 946-9101
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 30
CONTACT: Louis Chistolini, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Classroom instruction — "Problem Solving with Microelectronics" — teaches students to solve problems in technology education using the systems model of input/process/output related to student-relevant activities in microelectronics. Successful completion of the module teaches students how computers and digital electronics function. Students also experiment with memory and storage of digital information. "Black Box" electronics is demystified in the module.

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DISTRICT: Miller Place Union Free School District
SCHOOL: North Country Road School
ADDRESS: 191 North Country Road
Miller Place, NY 11764

TELEPHONE: (516) 474-2710
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 420
CONTACT: Harry Faulknor, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

In grade 8, students take what is called a "life skills mini-course" program. It consists of three 10-week mini-courses. The subject areas include: *Skills Keyboarding*, which is a combination study skills and computer application course teaching typing; *Self-Esteem*, which is an experience using the Lions Quest curriculum focusing on positive self-esteem; *Art II*, which is a painting course designed to bridge the gap between the required grade 7 art course and the high school program.

The "life skills mini-course" program is an attempt to emphasize and promote requisite academic knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school and in later life.

Typing on a computer keyboard, studying "self-esteem," and painting are all very worthwhile pursuits that enable students to explore new subject areas. The project has been very positive, with student interest very high in these areas. Parental feedback has been positive especially in the self-esteem course, where parent involvement is emphasized.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Not Applicable
SCHOOL: Nardin Academy
ADDRESS: 135 Cleveland Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
TELEPHONE: (716) 881-6262
GRADE SPAN: Pre K-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 311
CONTACT: Mary Ann Endres, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The following practices allow for greater student involvement in exploratory work.

- In grades 7 and 8, science classes have one double lab period per week.
- With grades 7 and 8 language arts classes meeting for 80 minutes per day, the students have more time to use the library within the class period and to confer with their peers on their writing and have more freedom to consult with the teacher on an individual basis. Furthermore, these blocks of instruction give the students greater opportunities for trips to the public library, joint programs, guest speakers, and videos without disrupting the total schedule.

Block time also allows flexibility in allocating time for spelling, literature, and writing units. The benefits of such educational practices are as follows:

- Indirectly results in the developing of different teaching strategies.
- Allows for greater emphasis on creative thinking rather than rote memorization.

Social studies classes in grades 7 and 8 also meet for one double period per week. This block of time allows for greater use of the library and increaded research time.

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Horizons is a literary magazine published by and for our middle school students. Students in English classes are involved in doing many different types of writing throughout the year. Students on the magazine staff are responsible for selecting pieces from each English class for publication. The students who are writing are aware that they may be writing not only for a grade and their teacher but also for the larger audience of the school body.

The 8th grade students use the "Tour de Force" theater production of short stories, presented as plays, as a vehicle to become totally involved with their learning. First the books being presented by the Chamber Rep. Theater Company are reviewed by the students in class. Then the students prepare to be the hosts for about four other schools in this presentation. The students become involved working on the show as a backstage crew. They help plan, prepare, and serve lunch to the visiting students. In the past, buttons and plastic cups for "Tour de Force" have been included in making the event special. The students have the opportunity to see the short stories come alive and be a part of the production and at the same time make it an affordable experience for several different schools in the area.

Beautification Day is a student-initiated and -driven activity in which many students and staff are involved. Students contact local businesses for donations and use student council funds for the purchase of flower bulbs, mulch, top soil, and various landscaping supplies. Students and staff bring in tools on the

designated day and work to beautify the appearance of the grounds. They are involved in painting, planting flower bulbs, trimming and applying topsoil or mulch where needed. There are also entrepreneur projects going on during this time. Student groups decide what they are selling, determine the price, and figure out the profits. Some of the money earned is donated to a charitable organization of the students' choice.

Other activities that benefit organizations are the volleyball tournament and the "Jump for Heart" program. In the volleyball tournament, students form teams, collect pledges, and donate the money collected to the Cancer Society. The students set all the dates, make all the contacts, and even are responsible for designing the pledge forms and the T-shirts that are used for prizes. The students also participate in the "Jump for Heart" program. This program also involves collecting pledges. The students jump rope for a period of time to earn the money, which is then donated to the Heart Association.

Other activities are hosting roller skating parties and dances, and forming subcommittees to work on areas concerning the cafeteria, school rules, and the yearbook. Student council members have been active in providing guides and babysitting for school-community activities such as open house and during Dr. Garvin's evening presentation to the community. They also participated in the 50th-year building celebration and in purchasing the new middle school sign for the building. Student council members also held a contest to collect bottles and cans to raise money for the town's public library expansion project and other local recycling efforts.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867
TELEPHONE: (607) 564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Newfield School District has added 10 weeks of keyboarding to the curriculum. In addition to the career counseling, students have available a local nonprofit agency called The Learning Web. The "Web" provides both paid and unpaid apprenticeships to students with any of a host of local businesses and independent artisans. This service is provided through Tompkins County funding and/or subcontracting with The Learning Web.

The school has also begun planning for a School-Business Partnership. Included in the initial year of operation will be tours of facilities, internships, and incentives for at-risk students to stay in school.

For two weeks each summer, the school, in cooperation with three other school districts, sponsors "Super Summer School" for highly motivated students. Teachers from the four districts offer courses in such topics as rocketry, Mark Twain, Americana, broadcasting and Italian language. Students are nominated by the faculty.

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School
ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3228
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1001
CONTACT: Marguerite Micciche, Director of Mathematics

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The exploratory mathematics course meets every day for 10 weeks and enriches and supplements the 6th grade New York State Mathematics Curriculum. This allows teachers and students to spend concentrated time on projects and activities beyond the required curriculum. The course was developed by two classroom teachers with the assistance of the Director of Mathematics and Computers. The Standards, recently published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, was used as a guiding document in the preparation of the curriculum.

The goal is to ensure that all students have a greater appreciation of mathematics in a nonthreatening atmosphere that promotes greater teamwork.

When preparing the curriculum for Math Explorations, two documents were used: The Standards, published by The National Council of Mathematics, and The Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education. The class is heterogeneously grouped and includes special education students. Problem solving is the first priority including approximation and estimation skills. The problems include many nonroutine examples, and group work in finding solutions is frequently used. An interdisciplinary approach is used in many activities integrating art, science, writing, history, and mathematics. The class is conducted in a non-threatening manner where effort is rewarded, creating an atmosphere where risk taking and exploration are encouraged. The work is varied and includes many hands-on activities to maintain student interest. The teachers of this course are given common preparation time to plan, monitor, and modify the program to meet the needs of all the students. The appropriate use of calculators is taught to all stu-

dents, particularly in problem solving. This course enriches and supplements the New York State 6th grade curriculum. The Mathematics Explorations course attends to the dual purpose of academic preparation and self-development for all students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: North Tonawanda City School District
SCHOOL: Dr. Thaddeus F. Reszel Middle School
ADDRESS: 1500 Vanderbilt Avenue
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
TELEPHONE: (716) 694-8040
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 630
CONTACT: Eleanor Lenkeni, Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Home and career skills is offered for 35 weeks during grades 6, 7, and 8. Every student is scheduled. All special education students are mainstreamed. At all three levels, emphasis is on 75 percent "hands-on" activities.

Grade 6 students have home and career skills for five weeks. An introduction to the course includes the decision-making process. Students are encouraged to use it in their many in-class activities. Basic skills are taught from the" Personal Development" and "Personal and Family Resource Management" modules. Students are involved in learning to prepare simple foods with an emphasis on safety, reading and following directions, and cooperative work. They also create a hand-sewn project emphasizing reading and following directions.

Grade 7 students have home and career skills for 10 weeks. The process skills again form the foundation for the course. Decision making and problem solving are used many times. The "Personal Development" module is stressed emphasizing the development of a positive self-image through successful completion of projects and activities. A special "caring and sharing" project is carried out to help students relate positively with their families. The "Personal and Family Resource Management" module provides the opportunity for many hands-on activities. For example, sharing living space may use a scale drawing of shared space and ways to improve it.

Class activities in clothing management have students learn to sew on buttons and make minor repairs. They also create a pillow, locker caddy, or another project to enhance their skills.

Nutrition management emphasizes healthy food selection and evaluating food choices. Students learn to prepare quick and tasty luncheon and snack items.

The eighth-graders have home and career skills for 20 weeks. The previous learnings are enlarged upon here. Again, decision making is stressed. Students are actively involved in consumer studies and money and time management. Projects are an important part of clothing management with the production of sweatshirts or other items of clothing.

Nutrition management stresses good health. Special projects in preparing low-fat, low-cholesterol and low-sodium foods are carried out. Weight control and nutrition for sports are important topics too. Students study their heritage and prepare ethnic foods as a part of cultural appreciation.

Two important units are career development and entrepreneurship. Students take personal interest surveys in an attempt to learn more about careers. Use of the computer helps with this. Guest speakers and field trips are sometimes included. One of the favorite activities is the Entrepreneurship Unit. Students select and run a mini-business, taking charge of production, sales, advertising and quality control. Profits are donated to local charities.

Close attention is paid to the curriculum. All three grade levels as well as special education students are involved. All activities are coeducational with heterogeneous groupings. Emphasis is on "hands-on" activities with ample opportunity for each student to achieve success. Discipline problems are few and most often minor. Parents, teachers, administrators, and district are very supportive of the program. The home and careers skills teachers work enthusiastically to monitor the program and to develop new activities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Oceanside Central School District
SCHOOL: Oceanside Middle School
ADDRESS: Alice & Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
TELEPHONE: (516) 678-1200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 810
CONTACT: Enid D'Arrigo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The need for exploration that characterizes middle-level students is being met by the elective program of the Oceanside Middle School. One period of the school day has been designated as an elective period for each student. This period enables students to participate in a gifted program or a per-

forming music group or to work in any number of areas of personal strength or interest.

Students who are not involved in performing music or in the gifted program are presented with an array of courses every 10 weeks in an arena format. The teachers provide the students with a brief description of their course offerings in an auditorium setting. (The course offerings range from Calligraphy to Right Brain Drawing to Odyssey of the Mind Projects to "A More Beautiful You.") The day after the presentation, the students choose their avenue of study and a new cycle begins. The courses are ungraded explorations with comments being the only evaluation. Very often the courses provide the students with a new skill. Every student is programmed for three elective cycles, with the fourth cycle being a mandated general music elective.

Elective teachers meet weekly for discussion and planning, with their own unique needs in mind. Quarterly, the students and teachers of each period meet to plan and evaluate the direction of the program. This program, though not without some of its own particular problems, not only meets the need for new exploration but also provides the students with a segment of their schedule that truly belongs to them.

The Elective Program at Oceanside Middle School attempts to help youngsters define and understand their own uniqueness, permits students to make educational decisions, creates an environment in which both students and teachers relate to each other outside of the regular classroom, and encourages professional staff to take the opportunity to develop and implement their own curricula.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Oswego City School District
SCHOOL: Oswego Middle School
ADDRESS: Mark Fitzgibbons Drive
Oswego, NY 13126
TELEPHONE: (315) 341-5856
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 795
CONTACT: Edward W. Matott, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

In the area of planning and implementing exploratory experiences for middle-level students, the Oswego Middle School offers a wide range of programs.

The home and career skills program of instruction is designed to use applied activities as its basis of instruction. Decision making, problem solving, and management skills are an integral part of the individual topics in personal development, personal and family resource management, and career planning. Guidance presentations and counseling strengthen the module on career planning. Library research is also integrated into the career module.

The technology department is composed of four areas and teachers. Each of the four teachers is responsible for two specific modules of the curriculum in 7th grade and two modules in the 8th grade. Some modules are jointly addressed in classes. Learning activities for each module are designed to work within the confines of the laboratories, which were formerly the print shop, woodworking shop, metalworking shop, and computer lab. Students attend technology for 42 minutes, in each of three successive days. Then they attend physical education while another group attends technology. This schedule continues throughout 7th and 8th grade. Students change teachers at each quarter point throughout the year.

The visual arts program involves 7th and 8th grade students in hands-on learning activities for 13 weeks each year. During this 13-week period, students are given the opportunity to enroll in their choices of two or three 6 1/2 week courses offered to them. These courses provide the students with intensive study of materials and processes in areas such as printmaking, sculpture, batik, computer graphics/animation, various painting media, ceramics, weaving, calligraphy, and others. No course is repeated the following year. This teaching format offers alternative media and also illustrates the universality of syllabus concepts of color and light, space and structure, and movement. At the midpoint of each 13 weeks, students change art room, art instructors, and classmates as their personalized schedules dictate. Thus, during the students' middle school exploratory art experiences, they gain firm foundations of knowledge and skills in four medium/process areas, and conceptual understanding is reinforced several times.

The general music program is designed to give each student aesthetic awareness and a basic knowledge of music by providing experiences in singing, moving, creating, instrument playing, and listening. Specific goals based on these experiences are development of skillful listening, the ability to interpret notation, an understanding of the design of music, and an understanding of the relationship of music to history. This program involves all 7th and 8th grade students for 13 weeks each year and is implemented by two teachers. A 7th grade chorus and an 8th grade chorus are offered for those students with a desire to develop their vocal technique through varied literature in two and three parts. In-school rehearsals are scheduled twice weekly on an alternate basis with an instrumental program during a 39-minute "activity period." At least three concerts are performed including a Holiday Concert, a "Music In Our Schools Month" Concert, and a Spring Concert. Students from the band program participate in county- and state-sponsored solo and ensemble festivals, an All-County Band by audition, a Jazz Ensemble, and a student solo/ensemble recital.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 10 years

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DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 485
CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Palmyra-Macedon Middle School has an activity period from 2:20 to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Late buses are provided on these days. During the activity period, the following clubs and activities meet: Drama Club, Yorkers Club, Art Club, Journalism Club, Computer-A.V. Club, Student Council, Ski Club, Sign Language, Math Club, School Store, and Rocket Club. In addition, students may be required to stay with individual teachers for extra help during this activity period. All advisors for the above mentioned clubs are middle school faculty members, the majority of whom provide service on a voluntary basis. Intramural sports programs are also offered during this period of the day. A new district policy does not allow interscholastic teams to practice until 3:15 p.m. This allows student athletes the opportunity to take part in the full range of activities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Penfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Bay Trail Middle School
ADDRESS: 1760 Scribner Road
Penfield, NY 14526
TELEPHONE: (716) 248-3610
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Mary Kay Lewis, Project Enrichment Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: 1

Project Enrichment is an opportunity to question, explore and create outside of the classroom. It allows students to take the initiative in their learning, and to pursue topics which interest them. Project Enrichment is open to all students. There are 2 parts to the program, and any student is eligible to participate if they meet the requirements. That is, the student may be released from class if their classroom teacher feels (he) she can afford to be out of the room either for *one* class Type I, or at least *five* classes, Type III.

Type I - Large Group Enrichment Activities:

These activities allow students to learn more about topics of interest. In order to attend this presentation, the student must obtain permission from his (her) classroom teacher to be released for that single presentation. Some of the part Type I activities: Hearing-Impariment; Keeping Up With the Technology. J. Ramos-Santana, pianist. TV and Sports, How has it Changed the Game? Martial Arts Demonstration. Animal and Pet Care Information.

Type III - Individual Enrichment Activity:

A student may be excused from a class for at least five days to work on a topic that interests that individual. The student may be teacher-nominated for the program or nominate him/herself. Release forms for this activity are throughout the building. The hope is that students' research and work will culminate in a final original product. The enrichment team provides a guide or mentor to assist the students in their research and creative process.

Project Enrichment provides students with the opportunity to learn, create, explore, and discover topics of interest to them. Students are given the leeway to select the form of their final product and the opportunity to present it to an appropriate audience, i.e., their peers, teachers, an elementary class, or members of our community at the Challenge Fair in June. The students who participate in the program not only grow academically but also gain a sense of achievement and pride in a job well done.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Port Jefferson Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Port Jefferson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Spring Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
TELEPHONE: (516) 473-8151
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 264
CONTACT: Larry Lazar, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Basic Latin

This course is designed for students with specific needs. Those students who are classified as learning disabled or who did not have success in their 6th and 7th grade language classes are eligible for this Latin class.

The objectives of the course are to provide students with the opportunity to practice foreign language skills. The hope is that students will also transfer these skills to English. The course is geared toward assessing students' weak areas and matching methodologies to specific disabilities. This provides close instructional supervision, effective feedback, and monitoring of growth and successes.

The experience for these types of students is a positive one for it instills in them greater confidence. This is particularly significant since this may be their first foreign language experience or their previous language experience may not have been entirely successful. They become not only foreign language students but also Latin students. When they finish this course, they are able to begin any Language Level I at the high school and carry with them basic foreign language skills. Experiences during the past two years indicate that youngsters participating in this course have continued with foreign language at the high school level and have also been successful in doing so.

This program exemplifies the success of a very different kind of foreign language program that is geared towards students with special needs and is "outcomes" based.

6th Grade Language Exploratory

This course is offered to all 6th grade students not exempted by the Committee on Special Education, and an exploratory course it truly is. Students meet on alternating days throughout the year and are exposed to 13 weeks of Latin, French, and Spanish.

The course provides an opportunity for the student to explore major topics and themes of each language and its respective culture. Several key topics included in the curriculum are: family, numbers, body parts, and days of the week.

Cultural aspects of the curriculum address holidays, dress, foods, art, native stories, and history. Throughout the course, the emphasis is on active student participation, cooperative learning, and the development of oral skills. At the end of the course, students are prepared to choose the language they will pursue in 7th grade. We believe that students gain confidence from such exposure and are able to carry on with some basic foreign language concepts into the Level I language that they choose.

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DISTRICT: Riverhead Central School District
SCHOOL: Riverhead Middle School
ADDRESS: 600 Harrison Avenue
Riverhead, NY 11901
TELEPHONE: (516) 727-8080
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 792
CONTACT: Sharon Fagan, Director/Supervisor
Special Programs

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: I

In an effort to stem the possibility of early failure, rejection, and dropout of students in the Riverhead Central School District, the Office of Special Programs, BOCES I, Suffolk, in conjunction with the Middle School administration, designed Project SUCCESS.

The underlying concept was to provide a series of positive support-type experiences for students who had been identified as possible candidates for retention in Grade 6. These experiences were designed and planned to include initial counseling and assessment; field trips to companies and employment centers on Long Island; local guest speakers who could be seen as role models for these young people; and classroom type video and VCR programs that could be used as a springboard for discussion and interchange of ideas.

Middle-level students need opportunities to explore new subject areas, pursue personal interests, develop individual talents, and investigate potential futures and careers.

The experience during the first summer with Project SUCCESS indicated extremely positive outcomes with students, staff, administrators, and parents. As a result, plans are being effected to provide a similar program during the summer of 1990. At that time, the program will include an additional school district and an occupational education component.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Rye City School District
SCHOOL: Rye Middle School
ADDRESS: Parsons Street
Rye, NY 10580
TELEPHONE: (914) 967-6100
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 280
CONTACT: Willis Bott, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: I

For the second year, the Rye Middle School includes a pupil enrichment period (PEP) for both seventh- and eighth-graders. It is a regularly scheduled class that promotes skill development, enrichment activities, and interdisciplinary projects. PEP is a part of the instructional program and promotes the integration of subject matter to make a student's academic experience more meaningful and rewarding. For seventh-graders, the pro-

gram is conducted daily, while for eighth-graders, it is conducted on a semester (or half year) basis. PEP provides varied and unique experiences that might not otherwise occur during regularly scheduled academic classes.

The objectives of the program, which are found below, help equip students with the necessary academic skills and personal/social attitudes to succeed in the middle-level grades, high school, and beyond. A basic premise of the PEP is to enrich and support the instructional program for each teaching team. From this basic premise, two cognitive objectives result:

- Students apply important skills in English, math, science, and social studies, which include reading for understanding, effective writing, successful problem solving, and improved study skills.
- Students understand and integrate learning from several different subject areas.

The second major component of the Pupil Enrichment Program is the focus on affective goals through the Communication Awareness Program in grade 7. Therefore, two additional student outcomes are realized for seventh-graders. First, students are expected to work cooperatively with others and treat others in the group, team, and school with respect. This is a major goal of our Communication Awareness Program where we focus on a heightened awareness of self and of others in a supportive caring atmosphere. Second, students develop a more healthy self-image and demonstrate a more positive attitude toward school work and responsible school citizenship. Again, the Communication Awareness Program in grade 7, which is conducted as a PEP activity, is the vehicle for obtaining these affective objectives.

Specific components of the PEP program include:

- Orientation activities
- Study skills and thinking skills activities in the core academic subjects
- Specific learning and, when necessary, remediation activities
- Enrichment activities in the core academic subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning projects
- Drop Everything and Read Program
- The Communication Awareness Program - Grade 7 only.

Interdisciplinary projects are promoted to further enhance the teacher team concept that exists in the school. The four teachers on each team have common planning time which enables them to plan such projects. One interdisciplinary project was conducted jointly with the Rye Historical Society and was the "Rye Oral History Contest." First, students were trained by representatives from the Society in the skills required of the historian in basic interviewing techniques. Second, students collected data and wrote a report related to the history of their hometown and surroundings. The English teacher on the team assisted with preparation of the reports while the social studies teacher helped in the collection and interpretation of information. Students' reports were entered into the local contest. Another interdisciplinary project was a National Resources Project. All four teachers on one team were joined by the 8th grade technology teacher and worked with students on a project including one of the following:

- Air and water pollution
- Recycling of various materials
- Hydro electric power
- Alternative sources of energy
- Food and nutritional studies.

Students worked on their projects, which included a written report and visual representations (charts or models) during class and PEP time. Teachers in the Middle School continue to be overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the PEP program in grades 7 and 8 and its potential to enhance the learning experiences of the early adolescent. This can be seen by the wealth of objectives and activities that will be continued in the Middle School this school year.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Schenectady City School District
SCHOOL: Steinmetz Middle School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Avenue
Schenectady, NY 12303
TELEPHONE: (518) 370-8240
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 410
CONTACT: Edmond Stevens, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The faculty and administration at Steinmetz School have implemented a silent sustained reading program. After homeroom each morning, 30 minutes are devoted to silent sustained reading. The students may read any material that is appropriate, including books, magazines, newspapers, comic books, pamphlets, guidebooks, etc. Two faculty members are assigned to each homeroom, and the students are expected to use the time for reading.

The program has been funded by outside sources such as donations from the PTO and from local businesses and corporations. Faculty members, using their own time, solicited the business and corporation support. Faculty members have used the donations to purchase books and other reading materials for each homeroom.

Each spring, the faculty committee that guides the SSR program meets to evaluate the program and to make recommendations for the future. They also meet on an ongoing basis.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Skaneateles Central School District
SCHOOL: Skaneateles Middle School
ADDRESS: 35 East Street
Skaneateles, NY 13152
TELEPHONE: (315) 685-8361
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 350
CONTACT: Tiffany Phillips, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

There is an activity period after the end of the instructional day where students can receive extra help, make up work, use the library, and join a variety of activities including intramurals, various music ensembles, Drama Club, Yearbook Club, Science Club, Downhill Ski Club, Baseball Card and Stamp Collectors Club, Rocket Club, and Student Council.

There is also a Career Day held every other year where students have an opportunity to attend seminars presented by a wide variety of community members describing their professions.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

The Pumpkin Run is an annual project conducted by the Physical Education Department involving all students in grades 7 and 8. The run is conducted during the month of October in all physical education classes. The main objective of the Pumpkin Run is for each student to predict the time in which he/she can run a 3/4-mile course. A pumpkin is awarded to those three(3) students in each class who actually run the course closest to their predicted time. The students are well prepared for the Pumpkin Run. They are taught about wellness and the importance of a healthy body and fitness for life. They learn about diet and nutrition, the influence of weather plays on exercising, and the necessity of wearing appropriate clothing, especially when running and exercising. And of course, the students are trained cardiovascularly. They do a great deal of jogging and even practice the course before the run. Where do the token awards come from? The PTA is most supportive of the Pumpkin Run. They donate miniature pumpkins and ribbons to the prediction winners in each class. The event permits all students to be winners — not just those who are outstanding athletes, fast runners, or come in first. The students are taught that to finish the course makes them a winner. The Pumpkin Run is a positive tool to teach the youngsters about themselves and their capabilities. The emphasis is not on coming in first, or beating another student; it is on finishing the course as close as possible to a predicted time and feeling good about oneself.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: John Burroughs Junior School
ADDRESS: 150 Rockland Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
TELEPHONE: (914) 423-1804
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 800
CONTACT: Bernard Pierorazio, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: 1

Burroughs offers a unique experience for the middle school child in providing prevocational courses in a rotating exploratory program. The prevocational exploratory program consists of 10 weeks of instruction in the following areas: graphic design, metal design, architectural drawing, introduction to computers, cosmetology, fashion and foods, carpentry, and accounting. Incorporated within the curriculum for each course are the strands from the technology course required by the state.

The Enrichment Program at Burroughs involves the use of flexible scheduling on a weekly basis. The introduction of this program, which included 45+ courses created and designed by the staff, calls for a modified schedule that involved eight 35-minute academic classes and a 53-minute enrichment session.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1-4 years

Area m

Developing in Students a Feeling of Personal Efficacy and a Sense of Responsibility for Themselves and Others

Middle-level education schools provide opportunities for students to develop and practice responsible behavior, individual accountability and initiative, and a respect for others. This section presents several models and examples of programs that promote this personal efficacy and responsibility.

Area m: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Amherst Central School District
  Amherst Middle School
- Auburn Enlarged City School District
  West Middle School
- Churchville-Chili Central School District
  Churchville-Chili Middle School
- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- East Aurora Union Free School District
  East Aurora Middle School
- Hendrick Hudson Central School District
  Blue Mountain Middle School
- Irvington Union Free School District
  Irvington Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Mineola Central School District
  Mineola Middle School
- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newark Valley Central School District
  Newark Valley Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- North Syracuse Central School District
  Gillette Road Middle School
- Port Jefferson Union Free School District #6
  Port Jefferson Junior High School
- Schenectady City School District
  Central Park Middle School
- South Huntington Union Free School District #13
  Stimson Junior High School
- Ticonderoga Central School District
  Ticonderoga Middle School
- Ulster County BOCES
  Ulster County BOCES Alternative Middle School
- Valley Stream Central High School
  Valley Stream North High School
- Wappingers Central School District
  Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
- Weedsport Central School District
  Weedsport Junior-Senior High School

DISTRICT: Amherst Central School District
SCHOOL: Amherst Middle School
ADDRESS: 55 Kings Highway
Amherst, NY 14226
TELEPHONE: (716) 836-3000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Diane Eklund Klein, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Eighth-graders in Amherst Middle School are helping fellow students by offering alternatives and/or advice. Their acronym is ISA, Intra-School Advisors/students helping students. The objective of this program is to provide alternatives to students whose behavior interferes with their academic performance. This objective is accomplished by having the ISA members available to offer suggestions and/or advice to students in the form of a plan that identifies the particular problem and makes suggestion for change.

The selected students, a cross section of the entire population, meet during their lunch period two times per week to practice and develop decision-making/problem-solving skills that will lead to responsible behavior. A large amount of time is spent role playing in preparation for when a "real" student comes to the group.

Once training is completed, students are referred by the school's disciplinarian and invited to meet with the group for suggestions on ways they can control behavior that is interfering with their academic performance.

The person invited meets with the group two times. The first time the problem is presented and suggestions are made as to how to deal with the problem. The student has several options presented to him or her. The student then has to decide which option he or she could realistically handle. The second meeting involves feedback: what the student has done to become more responsible and accountable for his or her behavior and whether the problem is being solved. Success can easily be determined by the lack of discipline referrals for that student.

The middle school years are a very difficult time for the majority of the students. They are faced with a number of decisions to be made and problems to be solved that they may not have been confronted with previously. ISA emphasizes decision-making/problem-solving skills.

ISA is a productive group that provides a service to students in need of support and advice and to the school by helping to eliminate what could become serious discipline problems. Students often have problems, but as ISA shows, they can also be part of the solutions.

The child in the middle school years is at a point in his or her life where he or she has to make some difficult decisions. A program, "Choices and Challenges," is offered at Amherst Middle School for 6th grade students to help them face these situations and make appropriate, responsible decisions. The focus of the program is on self-awareness, decision-making skills, and goal setting. Students are recommended by their team teacher based on the following criteria: "creative" thinkers, history of making poor choices, difficulty following directions and staying on task. The group meets once a week for 15 weeks during the students' lunch period. Participation is voluntary. However, each student is requested to attend three meetings before deciding if he or she wishes to participate or not. Showing and teaching students the steps to problem solving/ decision making helps them understand that they do have control over their lives and what happens to them day to day. By being in this program, students begin to realize that they can control the outcome of situations they face each day. Through "Choices and Challenges," students realize that problems and/or situations are no longer road blocks but obstacles or challenges that they can overcome.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Auburn Enlarged City School District
SCHOOL: West Middle School
ADDRESS: c/o Administrative Offices
78 Thornton Avenue
Auburn, NY 13021
TELEPHONE: (315) 255-5825
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 560
CONTACT: Michael Orofino, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

At the completion of the 1987-88 academic year and the subsequent development of the building plan for 1988-89 academic year, the staff and administration of West Middle School embarked on a process to identify and assist at-risk students in grades 6-8. The personnel developed and implemented a three-prong model entitled "Just Say Yes to Success," incorporating the following parts:

- The identification of entering students to West Middle School who are classified as at-risk students
- The development and implementation of a teacher-student mentorship/relationship designed for students who are "almost there" but need a special one-to-one relationship to enhance that student's opportunity for success
- The development and implementation of the West Study Skills Process for each student.

Each of the above-mentioned components provides the student with the opportunity to succeed and to be recognized for his or

her success. The aforementioned statement is exemplified by the percentage of sixth-graders who scored above the SRP in reading and the number of potential 8th grade retentions indicated below:

- 91 percent of sixth-graders scoring above the SRP in reading. (It must be noted that this is the third year in a row that West Middle School sixth-graders have either equaled or exceeded 90 percent SRP in reading after a 76 percent SRP rating in the 1985-86 academic year.)
- One eighth-grader was retained in West Middle School from an 8th grade population of 124 student during the 1988-89 academic year.

West Middle School will continue to plan, organize and implement programs designed to enhance the educational experience of *all* students.

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DISTRICT: Churchville-Chili Central School District
SCHOOL: Churchville-Chili Middle School
ADDRESS: 139 Fairbanks Road
Churchville, NY 14428
TELEPHONE: (716) 293-1800
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 800
CONTACT: Dr. Joseph W. Hoff, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Three schools in New York State received the National School Public Relations Association Certificate of Merit for 1988-90. Churchville-Chili Middle School was one of those selected. The topic for recognition was "Catching People Doing Things Right." The following is the nomination that was submitted and recognized:

Name: Catching People Doing Things Right

Purpose: To create a climate of success in school by accenting positive behavior through a purposeful program of building aesthetics.

Analysis: Educational theorists have called U.S. secondary schools visual wastelands. Yet, just as our actions can model appropriate behavior for students, so can our physical surroundings. When it evaluates schools for outstanding quality through its Secondary School Recognition Program, the Department of Education looks for a number of characteristics, including a development of good character and values, all of which can be in part encouraged by our surroundings. We decided to take a look at our surroundings at the Churchville-Chili Middle School with two questions in mind: Is it readily apparent to students, staff, and visitors to our school that what this school is about is kids? and, Have we put out for consumption what we value?

Planning: This was not a casual approach to building aesthetics and student recognition. It has been heavily measured and factored into our mission. The process began with staff meetings regularly addressing the topic "How can we improve the environment of our school?" A meeting was devoted to sharing ideas ("Bring and Brag"). Another featured an "internal field trip" in which staff could visit as many classrooms as time permitted to observe and note exciting ideas and visuals that were a part of each room's environment. At the end of both meetings, ideas and observations were compiled and distributed to all staff. A Principal's Advisory Council representing each discipline was selected to review new ideas. An annual staff questionnaire was developed in which, among other things, staff were asked to rate student recognition at the Middle School and suggest or comment on ideas for recognition and building aesthetics. Based on their input, specific plans for student recognition and building aesthetics were included in the school's annual objectives. A professional photographer was hired to take full face candid pictures, and a new cover design for stationery and handbooks using students' pictures was developed. The custodial staff built display cases and contributed other fix-up touches. Donated bookcases, display cases, shelves, and other useful equipment were picked up from private individuals, store closings, and business surplus.

Execution and Communication:

The Middle School has been enhanced by a myriad of visuals. One display case headed "These Visitors Think We're Special," features visitors' letters and a map pinpointing where they've come from. A new picture board highlights the pursuit of excellence through honors, attendance, and visuals that say "You make a difference and you count." Large pictures of students adorn the halls. A special Middle School banner welcomes students.

Staff and Visitors:

Hanging plants add warmth to glassed-in bridges. Displays of art work and writing complement concerts. Students, staff, and guests can leave messages to one another on the "You're Special" board. Room numbers have been replaced by "at home and personal" pictures of faculty and staff

from their family photo albums. Our "You're Special" board has been featured in the weekly newspaper.

Weekly staff bulletins regularly reinforce, announce, and express appreciation for new ideas to recognize students and improve building aesthetics.

Evaluation: The annual staff questionnaire is both a planning and an evaluation tool. It measures past performance and helps determine future goals. Results of the questionnaire are compiled in the Staff Questionnaire Report, which all staff receive. According to last year's end-of-the-year report, 97.1 percent of the staff viewed the student recognition program at the Middle School positively. They also made several suggestions for continued improvements in building aesthetics. Having students and staff a part of the vitality of the school setting enables strong individual and group motivation and responsibility.

Additionally, parent and student comments have been positive. Predictions that pictures, art work, and banners would be defaced have proved wrong. Some have been up for more than a year now and not one has been damaged. Despite the addition of more than 200 students to the building, which went from a junior high to a middle school, suspensions and disciplinary referrals went down by over 40 percent. The Middle School has become a model for others. It was selected as one of the five Rochester-area schools to host visitors from New York and Canada for the New York State Middle Schools Conference. Over 52 teams from five states and three foreign countries have visited within the last 18 months.

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DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 180
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

When a school involves students in their education, personal responsibility and effectiveness results. Columbus Academy is designed to meet the early adolescents' need for control over their lives. We provide the opportunity to make responsible choices concerning their education. An active student council also fosters the early adolescents' sense of efficacy and responsibility. Discussions in advisory groups reinforce these values. When students at C.A. observe teachers working responsibly and cooperatively, they model such behavior.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: East Aurora Union Free School District
SCHOOL: East Aurora Middle School
ADDRESS: 430 Main Street
East Aurora, NY 14052
TELEPHONE: (716) 652-1000
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 380
CONTACT: Dennis W. Leach, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Students completing all school work and turning in homework assignments on time are allowed to leave school 1/2 hour prior to the regular dismissal. Students remaining for the "10th period" receive assistance from the classroom teachers or are given time to finish any incomplete assignments. All teachers are available to assist during the 10th period. Students remaining until the regular dismissal are given the opportunity to notify their parents. A letter is sent to the parents in September describing the program and notifying parents that this is not a detention program but a part of the school day. The 10th period is not referred to as detention and students are encouraged to meet the criteria for early dismissal. The extra period provides students additional assistance if they are having probelms learning a new concept or activity.

The Alternate Learning Center is for students having difficulty in the regular school setting. It works with students who have a variety of motivational and/or attitudinal problems that must be resolved before they can be successful in the middle or high school. The student's deficiencies in social and academic skills represent major sources of conflict with peers, teachers, and others in authority.

Goals:

- To foster the development of necessary social and academic skills that will lead to mainstreaming or successful integration into the regular middle school program
- To develop and enhance the student's confidence and self-esteem, so he/she can be successful in the middle and high school.
- To assist the student's family in dveloping an effective support system for their child.

A structured approach along with an assertive discipline format is practiced by the ALC instructor to teach prosocial and academic skills. The approach emphasizes positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior. The program is student centered and enhances the social and academic development of at-risk middle school students. The ALC is an important component of a school that wishes to create an environment where "All children will learn." This program along with others now in operation is a key component in creating a school without failure.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Hendrick Hudson Central School District
SCHOOL: Blue Mountain Middle School
ADDRESS: Box 14
7 Furnace Woods Road
Montrose, NY 10548
TELEPHONE: (914) 737-7500
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 471
CONTACT: Oscar Scherer, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

An extracurricular program known as the Partners Program is available to seventh- and eighth-graders. This is an intergenerational program that involves the students and senior citizens from the surrounding community working together on a variety of activities throughout the school year. Commitment and dependability are qualities stressed in the program and continually developed by each student through his or her participation. The thrust of the program has been to establish and develop relationships while compiling an oral and written history that reflects the life experiences of the senior citizens. To accomplish this, the students meet after school with the senior citizens at local centers. In addition, the students attend after-school seminars where they discuss what they have learned, their feelings, and how to work with others. Through this approach, students understand that a person is now relying upon them each week, and they must be ready and willing to participate in activities, as well as explore experiences in a new and different relationship. During the year, a luncheon is held at the school, and a publishing party is held in the evening to celebrate the publishing of "Springvale Memories," a collection of student writings based upon the interviews and words from the seniors.

The Partners Program is the only program in Westchester County that is an intergenerational program run after school. Through the students involvement in the life of the senior citizen community, they have become more aware of the problems facing the elderly; in addition, students develop a sense of public involvement and responsibility as a result of their endeavors. They also realize that volunteering for community service does not involve large amounts of the individual's time, and when done consistently and conscientiously, it can make a difference in the quality of another person's life, as well as their own. Since the program has been in operation, it has brought a lot of public recognition for the students and the school. In addition, it has been recognized as one of the outstanding intergenerational projects in Westchester County.

The Blue Mountain Middle School has instituted the following practices to foster the development and practice of responsible behavior.

- During each of the three lunch periods, students select other students with whom they would like to sit for a six week period. Each week, each table elects a table leader who is responsible for seeing that the table and area is left clean. If the lunch monitors determine that an area is unacceptable, the table leader is called back to remedy the situation. If the table earns satisfactory ratings from the lunch monitors for the week, the table leaders are dismissed with the first group at dismissal in the following week. Other privileges as determined by the students are awarded as the year progresses. After six weeks, students are able to select new table partners.
- All social activities conducted after school and during the evening are reserved for those who demonstrate responsible behavior. Prior to the event, each teacher receives a form on which the names of those who have not earned the privilege may be listed. If the name of a student appears on three or more teachers' lists, the principal meets with the student to discuss exclusion from the event.
- A special program is conducted with the 8th grade only. During the first week of school, the administration meets with each 8th grade team to explain how each student's decisions in citizenship and academic matters are important. To emphasize this, the students must demonstrate responsible behavior and effort in their studies to participate in the 8th grade year-end activities. At the end of each marking period, the comments on each student's report card are reviewed in the areas of effort, conduct, and citizenship. In addition, the student's behavior record is reviewed for positive and negative actions. If the student has a negative total at the end of each quarter, the administration meets with the student to discuss the situation and future courses of action, and a letter is sent to the parents. This is repeated each quarter with an emphasis on reversing the situation in cooperation with the student and parent. After a final review in June, youngsters who have compiled a positive total participate in all reward experiences; negative totals result in the denial of one or more of the year end activities.

- Each team participates in recreational field trips that are intended to meet the social needs of the students. A student may be excluded for academic or behavioral reasons if the majority of the team members agree that the student is showing little or no effort for more than a two-week period prior to the trip.
- Recognition assemblies are held at the end of each quarter where the entire student body is present. Here, staff in all of the disciplines have the opportunity to recognize the students for their effort and achievement. In place of an honor roll, the school has an Improvement/Achievement list that is read at the assemblies. At the end of the year, instead of a graduation exercise, the school has a Moving-Up Day, where awards and recognition are given to the entire student body.
- The school has implemented the teaching of decision-making skills on a variety of fronts. As a result of participating in the Westchester County project in this area, students are taught in their 6th grade English classes, using writing as a vehicle, how to make informed decisions using the model developed by Yale University. Through a series of activities, students learn how to identify a problem, research or think through the positive and negative alternatives, then analyze the consequences and risks associated with each alternative, and finally make a decision. Since its inception, the model has been incorporated into the areas of health, home and careers, reading, and technology education, where lessons reinforce what was taught in the 6th grade English classes. In addition, the administration employs the strategies taught in working with the students on discipline problems that arise during the school year. The program culminates in the 6th grade with a composition contest where students discuss and demonstrate, in writing (using the district's nationally recognized writing process), the decision-making process they would follow in solving a difficult personal decision. This is followed by an awards assembly where 10 percent of the students receive awards from the school and hear remarks from one of their elected officials of the town or county.

One of the cornerstones of Blue Mountain Middle School's philosophy is the development of student responsibility to self and to society. All of the practices delineated work as a whole to demonstrate to students throughout the day and the year that positive actions are important. Students receive a clear message that they are to be models for each other and that positive consequences accrue from positive effort and actions and that for every right there is a responsibility. Students also recognize that their growth in a positive direction will reap benefits. Finally, by undergirding all of this with the acquisition of appropriate decision making skills, students are developing the skills they need to address the many issues they will face as adolescents and developing alternatives to deal with problems they will encounter as adults.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN PLACE:

Partners Program - 2 years
Behavior Responsibilities (depending upon activity) - 1-10 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Irvington Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Irvington Middle School
ADDRESS: 101 Main Street
Irvington, NY 10533
TELEPHONE: (914) 591-9494
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 240
CONTACT: Andrew C. Kerfut, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: n)

Community service is a most vital aspect of pupil life at Irvington Middle School. The Student Council, Junior Red Cross, and Chorus are broad-based pupil organizations that reach out into the community at large. Food drives for the homeless and less fortunate, and visits to nursing homes and hospitals are regularly undertaken by IMS pupils through these organizations and other in-class endeavors. Especially with the elderly, the school strives to link middle school pupils so as to break down the communication and generational gaps and barriers that may exist. An outgrowth of the community-service projects has been the development of a closer sense of harmony between the middle-school-age pupils and the elderly and sick. Being useful and needed and of service to others has increased our pupils' feelings of personal efficacy and responsibility.

To help foster responsibility in pupils, a booklet of Student Guidelines has been developed with input from the Student Council. It serves as an outline of agreed-to expectations of pupils' behavior while in school.

It is necessary for middle-school-age pupils to realize and use their maturing abilities to gain a better awareness of their own self-worth and capacity to help others. The community outreach program in existence at Irvington Middle School has received widespread recognition and has helped emerging adolescents better understand their potential to create change now and in the future.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 12 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Robert Smith, Building Curriculum Coordinator

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Middle school teachers identify common practices such as headings on papers, outlining formats, recording daily assignments on the blackboard, assignment notebooks, etc.; it is then required, through mutual agreement, that teachers and/or students perform these identified functions in the same way. This allows students to adjust to a particular method or requirement. Students can then more fully concentrate on learning and not worry about procedural differences between teachers or classes. For example, it was determined that it is beneficial for all students to maintain an assignment notebook. Teachers agreed to a specific format, and parents and students were informed. Currently, the same assignment notebook format is required by all teachers at all grade levels for all students.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Linda Ruest, 6th Grade Teacher
Debra Kenney, Resource Room Teacher
Denise Karnath, Speech Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Programs such as dances, roller skating parties, assembly programs, field trips, and other special activities are planned by students under the supervision of one or more staff members. Students develop ideas and generate support, then contact businesses and service-providers needed to initiate the activity. Money needed to support these activities is generated through student fund-raisers such as an annual magazine drive and a school store.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis M. Tosetto, Principal
Michael Corrieri, In-School Suspension Supervisor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

A very complete written building-level disciplinary policy is used consistently. A range of disciplinary actions is listed for each corresponding rule. The procedure calls for stronger action in response to increased numbers of disciplinary incidents over specified periods of time. When requesting disciplinary assistance, staff members complete a brief form, which is submitted to the In-School Suspension Supervisor. The form briefly states the facts relating to the disciplinary incident and actions taken to date by the staff member completing the report (parent contact, etc.). The In-School Suspension Supervisor meets with the student, discusses the incident, meets with other students or staff if necessary, reviews the related policy section with the student, then implements the policy. On all occasions, a completed parent report form is mailed home in a plain envelope. This report states that a report has been made, cooperation is requested from the home, and parent contact is requested. The statement of the staff member is typed on the form, as is the student's response. The number of previous disciplinary reports during the school year is listed, and any disciplinary action taken is stated. Available disciplinary actions are listed sequentially on the form and checked off as needed. They include: spoke to the student, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and request for a Superintendent's hearing. Charted during the year are dates and number of disciplinary incidents for each student and reports submitted by various staff members of modifying related procedures in order to better meet student needs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174

TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: James Clauss, 7th Grade Social Studies Teacher
Barbara Barron, School Counselor
Peter Schreiber, 7th Grade Science Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

A prime consideration of the Builders' Club is the role of youth in the peer group and society. With these concepts in mind, the middle school seeks to make education relevant to the needs and interests of the individual as a transient, to allow the individual to develop a realization of self, and to achieve a measure of control over his or her own existence. It is with these specific goals in mind that the Middle School Builders' Club functions. The Builders' Club is a worldwide student organization affiliated with the local Kiwanis Club and the High School Key Club.The philosophies espoused within the middle school concept have been accepted, nurtured, and spawned by the Builders' Club. The many varied successes produced throughout school years are directly correlated to this union of philosophy and actuality of activity.

Members of the Middle School Builders' Club strive to:

- Work together in service to school and community.
- Develop leadership potential.
- Foster the development of strong moral character.
- Encourage loyalty to school, community, and nation.
- Demonstrate communication skills.
- Provide a school experience with a greater array of socializing activities that have been originated, discussed, and perceived by peer groups.
- Provide diversification of activities relating to immediate rather than remote goals.
- Provide opportunities for the development of problem-solving skills and an awareness for the order of the student's environment.
- Accept the plaudits and praise that correspond to a "job well done" - also, the criticism of a "failure."
- Provide the opportunity for the student to develop a positive self-concept, self-responsibility, and attitudes towards school and personal happiness.

This program provides students with opportunities to develop social skills by working with others and to explore their own needs, as well as the needs of others. Through active participation, students develop a feeling of personal efficacy and a sense of responsibility.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Barbara Barron, School Counselor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Students in the middle school who achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 to 4.0 are on the Honor Roll. These students are recognized for such outstanding achievement through a quarterly assembly following the reporting of grades. The program serves many purposes.

Students have an opportunity to work in a positive environment with the principal, who confers certificates on the honorees, instructs students on the procedure for receiving an award, and encourages appropriate group conduct while students receive awards and listen to a speaker. The socialization process is continued as students develop a comfort level with each other in receiving awards. Since many of these same students are highly motivated to participate in community and school activities including music, art, clubs, and sports, a community leader is invited to address the students on the topic of "leadership." The middle school music department performs, providing students with an opportunity to listen to and appreciate the talents of others. The owner of the local McDonald's Restaurant presents gift certificates to students with a 4.0 average. The middle school parent support group conducts a search for speakers and prepares refreshments for students. In June, the parents of each student who has achieved honor roll status at any time during the year are recognized with a reception for both parents and students.

This activity promotes a sense of respect and caring to engender a feeling of self-worth, self-confidence, and personal efficacy. It also encourages parents to understand and appreciate the progress of their children.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Mineola Central School District
SCHOOL: Mineola Middle School
ADDRESS: 200 Emory Road
Mineola, NY 11501

TELEPHONE: (516) 741-4943
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 600
CONTACT: Fern Moskowitz, Administrative Assistant

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Mineola Middle School has initiated a program called "Lunch Lab" for seventh- and eighth-graders. The Lunch Lab has the following guidelines:

- Students sign up by the beginning of their lunch period, with the attendance monitor from each class placing names on the list during homeroom period.
- 15 students per day can sign up for Lunch Lab.
- Students are expected to bring the books and supplies necessary with the exception of dictionaries, thesauruses, etc.
- Students can make up tests if prearranged.
- A student cannot sign up for consecutive days if others want to attend or if the staff senses that the Lunch Lab is being used as an escape from socialization in the cafeteria.
- The Learning Lab teachers are there to give assistance to students in organizing their work or group projects, in following directions, etc. *This is not a study hall.*
- Student participation in Lunch Lab is strictly at the student's discretion. *Teachers may not assign a student to Lunch Lab.*

Collaborative planning through professionalizing and empowering faculty led to this new and innovative programs, providing an opportunity for students at Mineola Middle School who want help to get that help during the school day. This use of participatory management at the middle school level has proved to be an exceptional way to improve the educational climate for students and staff.

The Lunch Lab is an excellent example of middle-level students being given the opportunity to practice both individual initiative and responsible behavior. Each and every day, the student is individually accountable for how he or she spends one-eighth of the school day. Since part of Mineola Middle School's philosophy aims to help students learn to take ownership for their actions, the Lunch Lab option allows them to do just that. Using the option also frees up some of their after-school time, giving them more time for sports, clubs, and part time jobs.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

The library club members not only meets once every other week during our club day period but also provide a needed service to the school every day through their work as aides in the library. Library Club provides a staff of about 12 students; each student works one period every other day. To be in the club, the student must fill out an application and be selected. Club members are responsible for many jobs in the library such as answering the telephone, straightening magazine racks and shelving books, making PA announcements, locating and preparing equipment for teachers' use in the classroom, assisting other students with research projects, signing out books and filmstrips, keeping circulation records, stamping new books and magazines, and picking up mail. These students develop an ownership about being part of the library and take on these responsibilities themselves.

In preparing and carrying out the 50th-Year Building Celebration, there were many students, staff members, and committee members involved. The student council sponsored "Buy a Brick." This project gave committee members the opportunity to make a donation towards the purchase of a granite sign that would officially rename the building as a middle school. It was a day-long celebration in which the building was open to the public, invitations were sent out to state and local dignitaries to speak, and student guided tours were given throughout the building. Activities included raising new national, state, and school logo flags. The U.S. flag came from Washington, DC, and the logo flag was designed from the winning student entry. Picnics were held for each grade level, with a special cake. The stage band and chorus performed, a time capsule was buried, and team activities were conducted.

The Special Class (self-contained) program at the Newark Middle School is a three-year program, students range in age from 13-16. Part of the prevocational/vocational curriculum provides for "second" and "third" year students to be involved in a work placement. Students work in the cafeteria (dishroom and kitchen) and also as custodial helpers. Students are required to fill in time sheets, calculate hours worked, fill out pay vouchers. The purpose of the program is to expose the students to "good work habits" (being on time, taking pride in a job well done, responsibility, dependability, following a work schedule, following directions, and getting along with co-

workers). The intent of the program is to enhance and promote vocational opportunities for our students.

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DISTRICT: Newark Valley Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Valley Middle School
ADDRESS: Whig Street
Newark Valley, NY 13811
TELEPHONE: (607) 642-5524
GRADE SPAN: 4-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 555
CONTACT: Robert Gwinn, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

"6th Success" is a program that was developed to provide 6th grade students with an opportunity to learn and practice various social skills in a small-group setting. This 10-week unit was developed by two 6th grade teachers and the middle school counselor.

Twelve staff members, consisting of 6th grade teachers, librarian, principal, psychologist, PSEN coordinator, and teacher aide have all been trained in small-group facilitation skills by the school counselor. "6th Success" facilitators promote an atmosphere of trust, support, and honesty in their groups. Each facilitator is provided with a "6th Success" manual, which outlines the unit. Facilitators are also given all materials they will need over the 10-week period. This supports the facilitator so that he or she does not feel overwhelmed with having to teach something else in addition to his or her curriculum.

The "6th Success" groups meet one 40-minute period per week for 10 weeks. Since our facilitators include staff members who are not 6th grade teachers, they meet the same period each week (i.e., Fridays, 1st period) and then 6th grade team teachers rotate their schedule so that each of the five core subjects miss only two class periods during the 10-week unit. Sixth grade students are carefully divided into small groups of 10 or 11. They feel special to be able to participate in something unique to their grade level.

The 10 lessons are:

Lesson #1 - Goal and purpose of the group; set ground rules; getting acquainted activity
Lesson #2 - Awareness of self - Who Am I?
Lesson #3 - Awareness of others; similarities and differences
Lesson #4 - Assertiveness
Lesson #5 - Rights and responsibilities; peer pressure
Lesson #6 - Social courtesy; respect
Lesson #7 - Conflict resolution; mediation skills
Lesson #8 - Goal setting; long- and short-term goals
Lesson #9 - Pride in academic achievement
Lesson #10 - Closing.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867
TELEPHONE: (607) 564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Four years ago, the Newfield Central School participated in a grant application to institute a school-based mediation project in cooperation with another school district and Community Dispute Resolution Center in Ithaca, NY. The project was funded. Approximately 15 students and teachers are trained each year as mediators. A faculty member acts as coordinator. An assembly every year is used to explain the project to students. Mediations are coordinated through the faculty member. The mediations involve only students and are confidential. The impact is noticeable. About 25 students have learned the skills of mediation and that alone has been worth all the effort and funding. But many students who formerly solved their problems with force and/or withdrawal have found an alternative that allows everyone to "win."

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: North Syracuse Central Schools
SCHOOL: Gillette Road Middle School
ADDRESS: RD #4
Clay, NY 13041
TELEPHONE: (315) 699-2777
GRADE SPAN: 5-7 **ENROLLMENT:** 1029
CONTACT: David Morton, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Using Brookover, etal., *Creating Effective Schools*, Gillette Road Middle School designed an "Effective Schools" discipline plan. Administrators and teachers used several staff development days to design a discipline program common to the entire school, understood by all students, that clearly encouraged the student to take charge of his or her own behav-

ior. With 1,000 students, 87 teachers, and 3 administrators, the plan was necessary to provide a feeling of family in the building. All adults became "in loco parentis."

Five appropriate behaviors were identified for each area of the building (e.g., classroom, halls, assemblies, and cafeterias). Five consequences were identified for inappropriate behavior. These *behavior guidelines and consequences were typed*, laminated, and placed in every classroom. Administrators had assemblies by grade level to present the guidelines and consequences to students. Each year, administrators follow up these assemblies by scheduling discussion/explanation sessions in every classroom. Teachers reinforce these discussions. Appropriate behaviors are easily understood. Consequences include a warning first, followed by a trip to the holding/time-out room on the second offense. In the holding room, the student complete a contract to be signed by his or her parents indicating what "rule" they broke and how the student plans to change his or her behavior. On the third offense, students automatically receive detention for 1 1/2 hours after school and two detentions followed by a letter to parents from the principal warning of a suspension on the next step. The fifth step is in-school suspension.

The discipline plan is based on an effective model. It is "public" (i.e., posted in each classroom), explained to every adult and student, and designed with staff involvement through shared decision making. Although this is a rather detailed discipline plan, it has achieved the goal of reducing discipline to a behavior management issue. Serious discipline problems have been reduced, adults and students have a vested interest in the whole building, and staff focus attention and energies on instruction.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

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DISTRICT: Port Jefferson Union Free School District #6
SCHOOL: Port Jefferson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Spring Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
TELEPHONE: (516) 473-8151
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 264
CONTACT: Larry Lazar, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

The focus of student council activities is to give youngsters opportunities to provide input and become involved in decisions that will respond to their concerns and interests - "student empowerment."

- Student council homeroom meets daily from 7:30 to 7:50.
- Composition of student council: Student council officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer); Presidents of each grade (6, 7, and 8); and Homeroom Representatives (two from each homeroom).
- Incentives to participate:
  - free admission to school-wide activities,
  - first choice on selected field trips, i.e., ski trips, hockey games,
  - opportunity to maintain/improve schoolwide activities and participate in the decision-making process.
- Election week activities include speeches by all candidates running for office and a week of campaigning culminating in the student body voting using County Board of Elections' machines.
- Activities planned, organized, and/or implemented by student council:
  - Student council wrote its Constitution and "Students Rights and Responsibilities."
  - Fund-raising activities to support dances, lunch period games/equipment, etc..
  - Chairity activities such as Bowl-for-Heart and Donations to local agencies.
  - Valentine's Day Dance and Computer Match.
  - Halloween activities: costume judging contests, dance, door-decorating contests.
- Interaction - student council representatives spend much of their time working with and for the students of the school. Various school functions are run by student leaders.
- In addition to activities listed, the student council advisor helps to organize the Council of Student Leaders. This organization consists of students from 17 middle schools and meets annually to exchange ideas and allow student leaders to associate with leaders from other schools.

Student council representatives participated in meetings with teachers and administrators to:

- Develop or modify school policies/practices - i.e., students submitted a petition to change "walkman" policy ("walkmans" had not been permitted in school). They are now permitted within clearly defined guidelines. There have been no complaints from either teachers or students since the plan was implemented.
- Participate with parents and/or teachers on committees to implement new programs - i.e., student representatives met with parents and the school administrator to discuss, plan, and offer ideas for a Friday evening recreation program implemented by the community.
- Students also worked with teachers to develop a questionnaire for the student body and interview consultants for a school-wide Human Relations Day. (Consultants indicated that this was their first experience being interviewed by students.)

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Schenectady City School District
SCHOOL: Central Park Middle School
ADDRESS: Elm Street
Schenectady, NY 12304
TELEPHONE: (518) 370-8250
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 470
CONTACT: Gail Smith, Assistant Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

In response to several incidents in which students were so upset by peer relationship problems that they were unable to remain in class for several days, the administration and the school nurse, in partnership with the district's Home-School Community Relations office, developed an informal discussion and support peer group, which met approximately once every two weeks. Topics of discussion were generated by the group and included male/female relationships, peer pressure, and family dynamics. Adults present included the community relations director, the assistant principal, the school nurse, a former school board member, a nurse-midwife from the local hospital, and the director of our Pregnant and Parenting Teens program. The final meeting was a lunch at a local restaurant.

Student-to-student relationships have a great impact upon academic achievement. Peer pressures and relationship concerns often usurp much of a student's efforts and attention. Frequently students have no adult in whom they are willing or able to confide. Self-esteem, so essential to school success, is negatively influenced by many of these relationship problems. The problems are often based upon incorrect information, feelings of isolation, and a lack of hope, and these types of concerns often place students at risk for depression, substance abuse, or worse. An informal group such as this builds positive adult/student relationships, gives students a place to bring concerns, and provides a way for school personnel to monitor at-risk students in a nonthreatening way.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: South Huntington Union Free School District #13
SCHOOL: Stimson Junior High School
ADDRESS: Oakwood Road
Huntington Station, NY 11746
TELEPHONE: (516) 673-1690
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 788
CONTACT: Marie Connelly, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

The lunch/study hall "walk-in" computer lab program at Stimson facilitates the development of personal efficacy and responsibility in students. These students, on a voluntary basis, have the opportunity to come to the lab during the study hall portion of the lunch period. In the lab, students may elect to use any existing educationally oriented software for the spectrum of purposes ranging from remediation in a specific discipline to simple interest and entertainment. Staffed by a full-time paraprofessional and a computer knowledgeable teacher, the lab affords students the chance to realize a self-motivated power to produce. "Also rans" and low achievers in the traditional classroom often experience a feeling of success and personal accomplishment.

This program is worthy of note because it offers the unique opportunity for students to perform in a non-threatening environment and reap the results of their own self-motivated efforts.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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DISTRICT: Ticonderoga Central School District
SCHOOL: Ticonderoga Middle School
ADDRESS: Alexandria Avenue
Ticonderoga, NY 12883
TELEPHONE: (518) 585-7442
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 243
CONTACT: Brad Peria, Social Studies Teacher

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

Space Odyssey is a multifaceted competition designed to promote and reward responsible academic and social behavior. Grade levels are awarded warps (points) at the conclusion of each week based upon successful completion of their responsibilities. As grade levels accumulate points, they are rewarded with appropriate activities. Each week the three grade levels are eligible to earn warps based upon their progress that week in school. There are six areas that are examined each week: homework, book covers, cafeteria manners, overdue library books, neatness of homerooms, and disciplinary referrals. Grade levels have the potential to earn six warps each week in each area. Students are rewarded at various stages of Space Odyssey based on the number of warps they have earned.

After Space Odyssey was in place for several weeks, it became obvious that not all students were interested in or concerned

about helping their grade make progress (it should be noted that this has been a very small number of students). At this point, staff members were asked to make note of those students causing infractions. Those students whose names continually appeared were informed that they were no longer being allowed to participate in Space Odyssey. However, criteria have been established to enable these students to earn their way back on board Space Odyssey.

Space Odyssey provides opportunities for all students to work toward a common goal both individually and as members of a group, promotes positive peer pressure, and provides opportunities for students to practice responsible behavior, accountability, and initiative.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

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DISTRICT: Ulster County BOCES
SCHOOL: Ulster County BOCES Alternative Middle School
ADDRESS: 200 Canal Street
Ellenville, NY 12428
TELEPHONE: (914) 647-6539
GRADE SPAN: 7-9 **ENROLLMENT:** 25
CONTACT: Harv Hilowitz, Supervisor

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

The Ulster BOCES Alternative Middle School utilizes a staff-designed behavior modification point system designed to maximize appropriate behavior and academic achievement while providing documentary evidence to students and parents reflecting in-school behaviors. Students earn points each academic period and during homeroom, passing, and free time by demonstrating specific, desirable behaviors. Points accumulate throughout the day resulting in privileges and rewards, which students receive daily, weekly, and monthly. Rewards include free time, the right to have lunch out of the building, gift certificates to local stores and recreational facilities, and monthly recreational field trips. Students carry with them a "point sheet" that is tallied at the end of each day. Bargaining for points is not entertained. Behaviorally appropriate students are able to phase out of the point system altogether by having excellent behavior for three consecutive weeks. Such students earn double rewards automatically, provided their behavior and academic progress remain consistently good.

The BOCES Alternative Middle School Behavior Modification System has proven to be a successful innovation for the at-risk population in the school. Recording and tallying procedures are simple, and students are easily integrated and maintained in the system. The system provides for a tangible record of behavior that is very helpful in allowing parents and students to reflect upon daily realities, and encourages self monitoring of behaviors. The system provides information about specific areas of weakness, thereby providing staff with an opportunity to examine and discuss those areas with the student while also concretely reinforcing appropriate academic and personal/social behavior. The system can also be "extinguished" for the appropriate student, a contingency that discourages students from becoming overly tied to the system and encourages self-monitoring of behavior.

The BOCES Alternative Middle School utilizes a "time-out" room, which serves as a multipurpose study hall, lounge, and counseling area. Students, at their discretion, may leave even academic classes and go to the room, provided they make up their work and do not abuse the privilege. Staff members may send students into the time-out room for independent study or free time if they've earned it or need it. Appropriate use of the room encourages student feelings of ownership of the school and school routines and actually discourages hall/bathroom loitering and crisis-cutting of classes. Students who develop recognition of when they need time out rather than acting out to get attention, have learned an important life skill. Students are allowed to decorate the room as they wish (which has contributed to a significant decline in graffiti in the rest of the school) and must keep it orderly. Staff members monitor the use and condition of the room daily. The "time-out" room encourages a user-friendly school climate and allows for a student place of "refuge" within the school. Appropriate use of the time-out room encourages student self-monitoring of feelings and behaviors and has been useful in diffusing numerous crises. The room promotes a feeling of personal efficacy, accountability, and a sense of responsibility. Opportunities for individual instruction, counseling, and even relaxation (as appropriate) abound. Students develop the idea that the school is theirs and is a place they can be themselves.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Valley Stream Central High School
SCHOOL: Valley Stream North High School
ADDRESS: 750 Herman Avenue
Franklin Square, NY 11010
TELEPHONE: (516) 561-7903
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 690
CONTACT: Robert Alden, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

The Student Peer Organization is a program that attempts to

foster positive peer relationships between older and younger students within our school. The members of this group are recruited from the junior and senior classes of the school. Applications are filled out and a screening process is followed. Informal contacts are made with teachers and guidance counselors, and a screening interview is set up. This interview is conducted by a team composed of the faculty advisor and two senior members of the organization.

The Student Peer Organization meets once a week for supervision. Students are trained in problem-solving techniques, role playing, self-awareness, and skills for group leadership. The group is divided into teams and assigned to 7th grade Health classes. Each team remains with the assigned class throughout the year. SPO members visit their classes once a month from November through April, with a visit in May set aside for evaluation. Subject areas may include decision making, substance abuse information, peer pressure, self-esteem, and values clarification.

There are several important issues that are addressed through the implementation of peer leadership programs. All too often, talk is about the influence of negative peer pressure on teenagers. This is an opportunity for students to exercise a positive influence on each other, not just in terms of what they say, but in their actions. Their caring and concern are demonstrated by the fact that members of SPO are volunteering their own time and giving up lunch or free periods to be part of this program. They are not getting extra credit or grades for their participation. They are experiencing the feeling of devoting time and energy for their peers and are rewarded simply by the knowledge that they have done their job well. In more concrete, tangible terms, peer leaders develop greater self-awareness and improved self-esteem and learn more effective communication skills that will ultimately benefit them in future endeavors.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 4 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Wappingers Central School District
SCHOOL: Van Wyck and Wappingers Falls Junior High Schools
ADDRESS: 15 Myers Corners Road
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
TELEPHONE: (914) 298-3610
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** Not reported
CONTACT: Roberta Rinaldo, Coordinator of Special Projects

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: m

In 1987, Van Wyck Junior High School became involved in a conflict resolution-mediation program. At present the school does not have a peer mediation center. Wappingers Falls Junior High will be implementing the program this year. First, teachers are trained in the area of conflict resolution. With the assistance of these trained teachers, the district's conflict resolution-mediation consultant goes to social studies classes to explain the program to the students who then nominate those peers they feel are qualified to become mediators. Staff can also nominate students. Nominees are interviewed, and those selected go through an intensive training that begins with a weekend spent away from the district. Once students are trained adequately, a peer mediation center can be established. Two mediators are required to mediate a dispute; a trained adult observer is always present.

The Van Wyck program has been a success. Conflicts are referred to the center by teachers, parents, and administrators, and there are frequent self-referrals. Although fights are not mediated, once fighters return from a suspension, they are expected to go to mediation in order to prevent a recurrence of the initial problem.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Weedsport Central School District
SCHOOL: Weedsport Junior-Senior High School
ADDRESS: 2821 E. Brutus Street
P.O. Box 3000
Weedsport, NY 13166
TELEPHONE: (315) 834-6652
GRADE SPAN: 6-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 525
CONTACT: Nelson Bauersfled, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREAS: m

For the past two years The Weedsport Junior-Senior High School has employed a program for all 6th and 7th grade students developed by the Lions Club International. The program is titled Quest or Skills for Adolescence. It is a nationally validated program designed to improve student self-esteem, decision making skills, interpersonal skills, tolerance for others and communication skills with peers and adults. All staff who present this program have been trained in its use. The program also contains a parent workshop component. The program is designed as an early intervention program to focus students on the process they use in making personal decisions and hopefully enables them to resist peer pressure and make adolescent decisions more thoughtfully and consciously.

The parent training component is designed to provide parents with skills that will enable them to enhance communication between themselves and their children. The program has had a very positive impact on our student population and is well received by parents and the community.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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Area n

Identifying Desired Student Outcomes for the Middle-Level Grades and Appropriate Assessment Techniques

Both the State Education Department and local schools are interested in identifying the desired student outcomes for middle-level education and alternative procedures and techniques to assess the achievement of the outcomes. Schools that have identified student outcomes for the middle level, particularly in areas other than the basic skills, and alternative assessment strategies describe their programs in this section.

Area n: CONTRIBUTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

- Community School District #3
  Columbus Academy
- Comsewoque Central School District
  John F. Kennedy Middle School
- Lewiston-Porter Central School District
  Lewiston-Porter Middle School
- Yonkers City Schools
  John Burroughs Junior High School

DISTRICT: Comsewoque Central School District
SCHOOL: John F. Kennedy Middle School
ADDRESS: 200 Jayne Blvd.
Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776
TELEPHONE: (516) 474-8160
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 675
CONTACT: Jack Zamek, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: n

The *TARGET Interactive Project* (TIP) is an interactive video experience designed to assist students in developing decision-making skills relative to the use of alcohol and other substances. The goal of TIP is to help students learn how to better live a healthy life-style and resist social influences to use alcohol, tobacco, and other chemicals.

- Develops attitudes to succeed
- Affirms the importance of the individual
- Provides health-related support services
- Engenders feelings of self-worth, self-confidence, and personal efficacy.

This program refines student ability to judge and apply reasoning skills to resolve societal problems and disputes in real-life issues.

The TARGET Project provides a unique experience in the classroom instructional environment. Through the use of high technology, students are involved in a real-life situation using decision-making skills previously taught and discussed in health classes. The desired student outcomes are very specific.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

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MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

DISTRICT: Community School District #3
SCHOOL: Columbus Academy
ADDRESS: 100 West 77th Street
New York, NY 10024
TELEPHONE: (212) 678-2923
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 80
CONTACT: Esther Forrest, Director

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: n

Long before reports came out on middle schools, there were educators who knew, from experience and intuition, what makes a school effective. The founders of Columbus Academy, Geraldine Charney and Esther Forrest, are two such educators. They selected a staff with the same philosophy. The latest middle school task force reports have reinforced and authenticated what Columbus Academy has been doing since the school's inception. The desired student outcomes are:

- To be literate
- To be able to think critically and creatively
- To lead a healthy life
- To behave ethically
- To have the desire to always be a learner - "to explore, to try new things, to experiment, to learn, to grow."
- To be able to make responsible choices concerning their education and their lives
- To recognize that they are unique individuals with strengths and weaknesses
- For each student to reach his/her full potential
- For each student to feel self-worth, self-respect and self-confidence
- To act responsibly, feel personally accountable for their actions and show respect for others.
- To have a sense of community and collective responsibility.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Lewiston-Porter Central School District
SCHOOL: Lewiston-Porter Middle School
ADDRESS: 4061 Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
TELEPHONE: (716) 754-8281
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 622
CONTACT: Dennis M. Tosetto, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: n

A very complete Parent/Student Handbook has been developed by the middle school staff and parents. Parents of 6th grade students are notified by mail in advance of the specific date the handbook is to be distributed to students. The handbook provides detailed information on all aspects of our middle school, beginning with an explanation of the concept of middle school. Student expectations, disciplinary rules, special programs such as dances and assemblies, the standardized testing program, building map, staff listing by room number, graduation requirements, an outline of each curriculum, and instructional methodology are all provided. Teachers worked together to provide a written description of each course of study, homework expectations, and grading practices, using a common format. This process helps to maintain a common, articulated pro-

gram in the middle school. The Handbook is updated on an ongoing basis by involved staff. This process is simplified through the use of a computer word processing program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 3 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: Yonkers City Schools
SCHOOL: John Burroughs Junior High School
ADDRESS: 150 Rockland Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
TELEPHONE: (914) 423-1804
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 800
CONTACT: Bernard Pierorazio, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: n

Burroughs has instituted schoolwide School Improvement Plans that have resulted in increased standardized test scores on the PCT in both writing and reading, therefore achieving desired student outcomes. Established during the 1987-88 school year, the program calls for between five and eight activities that are completed schoolwide; participation of all students achieves the greatest impact. A pretest, an instructional session, activity sessions, and a posttest are part of the procedures.

Comparative results over the past two years can be documented.

PCT	1987-88	1988-89	Results
Writing	62%	93%	+31%
Reading	63%	72%	+9%

The 1989-1990 school year will incorporate mathematics into the SIP Program.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 2 years

NATIONAL SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM AWARD WINNERS:

NEW YORK STATE MIDDLE-LEVEL SCHOOLS

The U.S. Department of Education has, since the early 1980s, sponsored a National School Recognition Program that is intended to identify and recognize schools that exemplify good educational practice. The application procedure is a three-phase progressive process:

First Phase: ***State Nomination*** where each State Education Department conducts a screening activity and submits a select list of nominees to the U.S. Department of Education;

Second Phase: ***Site Visit*** which involves a review of each nominee's application by the U.S. Department of Education and a site visit;

Third Phase: ***National Recognition*** based upon the results of the site visit. Successful completion of any phase of the application procedure is a high honor for a school.

Several middle-level schools in New York State have participated with distinction in the National School Recognition Program and are listed on the following pages. To date, the State Education Department has nominated 54 middle-level schools for recognition by the U.S. Department of Education (First Phase). Of this number, 35 received a site visit (Second Phase), and 24 were recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (Third Phase).

NATIONAL SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM AWARD WINNERS: NEW YORK STATE MIDDLE-LEVEL SCHOOLS

COUNTY	SCHOOL/DISTRICT	YEAR LEVELS	GRADE STATUS	FINAL
Albany	Alton U. Farnsworth Middle School Guilderland Central School District	86-87	05-08	SV
Bronx	Roland N. Patterson IS 229 NYC - CSD 09	86-87	05-08	REC
Broome	C. Fred Johnson Middle School Johnson City Central School District	83-84	06-08	NOM
Broome	Maine-Endwell Middle School Maine-Endwell Central School District	88-89	06-08	REC
Dutchess	Orville A Todd. Junior High School Spackenkill Union Free School District	86-87	07-08	SV
Erie	Benjamin Franklin Middle School Kenwood-Town of Tonawanda UFSD	88-89	06-08	NOM
Erie	Buffalo Science Magnet - Zoo Component Buffalo City Schools	83-84	05-08	REC
Erie	Frederick Law Olmsted School #56 Buffalo City Schools	83-84	05-08	NOM
Kings	Seth Low Intermediate School #96 NYC - CSD 21	86-87	06-08	REC
Monroe	Dake Middle School West Irondequoit Central School District	83-84	07-08	NOM
Monroe	Pittsford Middle School Pittsford Central School District	86-87	07-08	REC
Monroe	French Road Middle School Brighton Central School District	84-85	05-08	NOM
Nassau	Carrie Palmer Weber Junior High School Port Washington UFSD	88-89	07-08	NOM
Nassau	Garden City Junior High School Garden City Union Free School District	84-85	07-09	REC
Nassau	Herricks Middle School Herricks Union Free School District	84-85	06-08	NOM
Nassau	Lawrence Middle School Lawrence UFSD #15	88-89	06-08	SV
Nassau	Oceanside Middle School Oceanside Union Free School District	86-87	07-08	NOM
Nassau	Wantagh Middle School Wantagh Union Free School District	88-89	07-08	SV

COUNTY	SCHOOL/DISTRICT	YEAR LEVELS	GRADE STATUS	FINAL
Nassau	Woodmere Middle School Hewlett-Woodmere UFSD	86-87	06-08	REC
Onondaga	Eagle Hill Middle School Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District	82-83	05-08	SV
Onondaga	T. Aaron Levy Middle School Syracuse City School District	82-83	07-08	SV
Putnam	Mahopac Junior High School Mahopac Central School District	86-87	06-08	SV
Queens	Louis Armstrong Middle School - IS 227 NYC - CSD 33	82-83	05-08	REC
Rensselaer	Algonguin Middle School Averill Park Central School District	83-84	06-08	NOM
Rockland	Kakiat Junior High School East Ramapo Central School District	88-89	07-09	NOM
Rockland	Pomona Junior High School East Ramapo Central School District	86-87	07-09	NOM
Rockland	South Orangetown Middle School South Orangetown Central School District	84-85	06-08	SV
Rockland	Suffern Junior High School Ramapo Central School District	83-84	07-08	SV
Saratoga	Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Middle School Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD	88-89	06-08	SV
Saratoga	Gowana Junior High School Shenendehowa Central School District	88-89	07-09	REC
Saratoga	Koda Junior High School Shenendehowa Central School District	86-87	07-09	REC
Schenectady	Iroquois Middle School Niskayuna Central School District	86-87	06-08	NOM
Schenectady	Oneida Middle School Schenectady City School District	86-87	06-08	REC
Schenectady	Scotia-Glenville Junior High School Scotia-Glenville Central School District	88-89	07-08	REC
Suffolk	East Northport Junior High School Northport-East Northport UFSD	84-85	07-09	NOM
Suffolk	Middleville Road Junior High School Northport-East Northport UFSD	86-87	07-09	REC
Suffolk	Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School Three Village Central School District	86-87	07-09	REC
Suffolk	Port Jefferson Junior High School Port Jefferson Union Free School District	86-87	06-08	REC

COUNTY	SCHOOL/DISTRICT	YEAR LEVELS	GRADE STATUS	FINAL
Suffolk	Robert Cushman Murphy Junior High School Three Village Central School District	83-84	07-09	REC
Suffolk	Shoreham-Wading River Middle School Shoreham-Wading River CSD	82-83	06-08	REC
Suffolk	West Babylon Junior High School West Babylon Union Free School District	86-87	07-09	NOM
Tioga	Owego Apalachin Middle School Owego Apalachin Central School District	88-89	07-09	NOM
Westchester	Anne M. Dorner Middle School Ossining Union Free School District	88-89	06-08	REC
Westchester	Blue Mountain Middle School Hendrick Hudson Central School District	82-83	06-08	REC
Westchester	Bronxville Middle School Bronxville Union Free School District	88-89	06-08	NOM
Westchester	Fox Lane Middle School Bedford Central School District	83-84	06-08	REC
Westchester	H. C. Crittenden Middle School Byram Hills Central School District	88-89	05-08	NOM
Westchester	Hommocks School (The) Mamaroneck Union Free School District	86-87	07-08	NOM
Westchester	Irvington Middle School Irvington Union Free School District	86-87	06-08	REC
Westchester	North Salem Middle School North Salem Central School District	86-87	06-08	REC
Westchester	Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School Croton-Harmon Union Free School District	84-85	06-08	REC
Westchester	White Plains Middle School White Plains City School District	86-87	07-08	REC
Westchester	Robert E. Bell School Chappaqua Central School District	84-85	07-08	SV
Westchester	Westlake Middle School Mount Pleasant Central School District	86-87	06-08	NOM

REGENTS CHALLENGE FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Schools Selected to Participate

The *Regents Challenge for Excellence in Middle-Level Education Program* is designed to address the need expressed by local school districts for assistance in implementing the *Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades*. The purpose of the Regents Challenge Program is to provide school districts with the opportunity to develop and implement innovative, alternative middle-level educational experiences that:

- reflect the Regents Policy Statement;
- are outcomes-based and designed to achieve the desired student outcomes in the 10 Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary School Students and detailed in State syllabi;
- can serve as examples and guides for other schools interested in implementing the Regents Policy Statement;
- will provide information useful to the State Education Department in developing recommendations on possible changes in Commissioner's Regulations.

Fifty-two schools, representing 43 districts, comprise the first cohort of schools selected to participate in the Regents Challenge Program. Following is a listing of these schools and a brief description of their projects.

REGENTS CHALLENGE FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION PROGRAM

(Program Descriptions for the Successful First Round Participants)

Altmar Parish-Williamstown Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Implement a middle-grades program for at-risk youth.

Plan and implement an in-house middle grades program for students at risk that will not only address their academic needs but also support them emotionally, psychologically, and developmentally in using small groups, community resources, district personnel, and other support services.

Blind Brook-Rye Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Institute a program of institutional self-renewal.

Undertake a middle school self-renewal program that involves: redesigning the school's mission to reflect better what students will need in the 21st century; creating a distinct middle school identity, structure, and organization that best reflects the mission and meets the needs of the middle-level students and achieves the desired student outcomes; conducting an extensive assessment and evaluation to determine how well the mission is being achieved.

Boynton Middle School, Ithaca City School District (Grades 6-8)

Develop a middle-level education program for at-risk youth.

Implement a middle-level education program for at-risk students that has work experience as a primary component. The goals of the program include: development of personal responsibility, self confidence, and a positive work ethic; identification of vocational interests; development of interpersonal and communication skills.

Bridgewater-West Winfield Central School District (see Mt. Markham Middle School)

Bulkeley Middle School, Rhinebeck Central School District (Grades 6-7)

Refine and improve an existing middle-level education program.

Review and revise the present middle-level education program (interdisciplinary, experiential learning activities, advisor/advisee program, whole language instruction, alternative assessment techniques, cooperative learning, active instruction, etc.) to assure that it: bridges the academic world to the experiential world of life; develops independent, self-directed learners; provides students additional learning opportunities; maintains academic excellence.

Camden Middle School (Grades 5-8)

Undertake an educational and organizational reassessment and restructuring of the middle grades.

Study the organizational structure and adapt it to meet the needs of early adolescents better—examine traditional instructional delivery systems in both the affective and cognitive areas; forge a partnership with parents; create a community for learning that will enhance each student's exploration and search for academic excellence.

Canandaigua Junior Academy (Grades 7-8)

Develop a fully integrated, articulated 6-8 middle school.

Plan and implement an expanded middle-level educational program that integrates the 6th grade into an existing 7-8 middle school, is developmentally sound, and is fully articulated.

Canton Central School District (see J. M. McKenney Middle School)

Charlotte Middle School, Rochester City School District (Grades 6-8); see also Monroe Middle School

Replicate successful programs and alternative scheduling practices that address the needs of early adolescents.

Expand successful programs and alternative scheduling practices to accommodate innovative instructional approaches: modification of curriculum; incorporation of alternative instructional strategies; staff development and peer assistance that allow teachers to learn, practice, and share instructional practices which benefit students.

Churchville-Chili Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Refine and enhance an existing middle-level education program.

Improve an existing middle-level education program with an emphasis on: the continued development of basic skills instruction and learning; the creation of a superior school climate/culture conducive to teaching, learning, and living; the refinement of a building staff development program.

Community School District #5, I.S. 195, New York City School District (Grades 6-8)

Maintain and improve the present middle-level education program.

Operate a middle-level school that features "schools-within-a-school" which are centered around: the performing, creative, and business arts; permanent teacher teams assigned to each subschool for three years to establish stable and positive relationships with students; a far-reaching and broad-based network of community, government, university, and business resources to support the educational program.

Community School District #26 (Five Schools with Various Grade Levels)

Develop a middle-level educational program in each of the middle-level schools within the district that addresses the needs of students in each school.

Plan and implement a middle-level educational program in each of the five middle-level schools within the district, tailoring the development to the needs, resources, and staff of each school.

Comsewogue Union Free School District (see John F. Kennedy Middle School)

Dansville Junior High School (Grades 7-9)

Develop a more positive school climate.

Create a more positive school climate with special attention on affective behaviors—improved student human relations and social skills, increased student tolerance for others, and improved student decision-making skills.

Dover Junior Senior High School (Grades 7-9)

Provide students a study skills program.

Maintain and refine, through alternative scheduling practices, a 7th grade study skills program that teaches students organization skills, goal setting procedures, learning strategies, problem solving techniques, etc. that facilitate learning.

East Aurora Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Pilot several programs designed to address the academic and personal needs of at-risk youth in the middle grades.

Implement and assess seven programs intended to help at-risk students be more successful academically, to increase the self-esteem of at-risk youth, and to develop a school atmosphere of respect, caring, and support for at-risk youth: Alternative Learning Center, Correctives, Home and Careers Skills Self-Esteem Program, Drug Abuse Resistance Education, Safety and Maintenance Program, Adopt-a-Kid, Lunch Bunch.

East Hampton Middle School (Grades 4-8)

Provide parents a more coactive role in the school.

Create and implement programs that enhance parent/teacher communication and parent networks. These programs will provide a focus for ongoing staff development, will support services that better integrate non-English speaking students, will foster positive student/teacher and peer relationships, and will promote the involvement of parents—with particular attention to the parents of students with whom, until now, the school has been least successful.

Farnsworth Middle School, Guilderland Central School District (Grades 5-8)

Build on and refine an existing middle-level education program.

Provide a more successful school experience for every student by assessing the need for varying the instructional environment for individuals or small groups of students, designing alternative instructional approaches, altering educational requirements to meet student needs, and implementing and monitoring these alternatives.

Gananda Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Transform a junior high school into a middle-level school.

Change a traditional junior high school into a middle-level school that has as its primary focus the meeting of the personal, social, and academic needs of early adolescents. Particular attention will be given to a youth-centered exploratory curriculum and the development of positive attitudes among the students toward school and learning.

Gaskill Middle School and LaSalle Middle School, Niagara Falls City School District (Grades 6-8)

Implement middle-level education programs.

Continue the development and implementation of a middle-level education program that focuses on the needs of middle-level students and their families, emphasizes parent involvement and communication, and reflects the recommendations of the Regents Policy Statement (e.g., heterogeneous grouping, teacher teams with common planning time, block scheduling, exploratory experiences, school programs and schedule alignment between the two middle schools, pupil services teams, etc).

George L. Lowry Middle School and Dr. Thaddeus F. Reszel Middle School, North Tonawanda City School District (Grades 6-8)

Establish a peer partnership between two middle schools.

Implement a collaborative, cooperative peer relationship between two middle schools to maintain academic excellence, share classroom instructional strategies and student support intervention programs that are sensitive to the needs and changes associated with early adolescence, and to develop a long-range in-service staff development program appropriate for middle school staff.

Greece Arcadia Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Pilot three vertically structured teacher team alternatives that provide students a stable, consistent, less fragmented learning environment.

Implement and evaluate three alternative teacher team structures: (1) a four-teacher team consisting of two K-6 certified teachers, two special education teachers, and an instructional aide with approximately 75 heterogeneously grouped students with the team and students remaining together for the entire three-year, middle school experience; (2) a four-teacher team consisting of two 7-12 certified teachers, two special education teachers, and an instructional aide with approximately 75 heterogeneously grouped students with the team and students remaining together for the entire three-year, middle school experience; (3) other vertically structured teacher teams organized so the teachers stay will a group of students for 2 or 3 years.

Hawthorne Junior High School, Yonkers City School District (Grades 7-9)

Develop a program for disadvantaged, potentially gifted or identified gifted, middle-grade students.

Plan and implement a model middle-level education program that addresses the needs of disadvantaged, potentially gifted or identified gifted, middle-grade students through an extension of the school year at a residential college site and an extension of the school week using research-based curricula and processes developed at Johns Hopkins University.

Henry L. Stimson Junior High School, South Huntington Union Free School District (Grades 7-8)

Develop a middle-level experience the meets the needs of middle grade students, now and in the future.

Create an educational experience that meets the needs of students now and in the 21st Century by maintaining a comprehensive educational program, encouraging an appreciation of the positive aspects of a multi-ethnic community, adopting a middle-level education philosophy for grades 7 and 8, establishing expectations that focus on excellence, and providing programs of extra help for students in need of assistance. The goals are to expand teaming, mentoring, and self-esteem programs to include more students with outcomes including academic, emotional, and social growth.

Herbert Hoover Middle School, Kenmore Union Free School District (Grades 6-8)

Revise, refine, and extend three programs designed to support the personal/social development of early adolescents.

Examine and improve three programs intended to foster the personal/social development of young adolescents: an Advisor/Advisee Program that provides each student with a personal advocate; the A.C.T. (Acquired Clear Thinking) Program intended to introduce students to a variety of thinking skills in the areas of critical, creative, and affective thinking; a Home Base Exploratory Program that allows students time to pursue non-academic personal interests, broaden their experiential base, and develop critical life skills.

Hicksville Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Improve an existing middle-level education program.

Examine and refine, under the guidance of a Middle School Planning Committee, the existing middle-level education program to meet better the needs of emerging adolescents and to further the following three goals: easing the transition from elementary school to high school, providing increased opportunities for teachers and administrators to share in decision making regarding the education of young adolescents, and promoting the parent-school-community partnership.

Iroquois Middle School, Niskayuna Central School District (Grades 6-8)

Continue and refine teacher team organization and heterogeneous grouping practices.

Maintain and extend two viable and successful practices of good middle-level education that are already in effect: teacher team organization and heterogeneous grouping of students whenever possible.

Ithaca City School District (see Boynton Middle School)

Jericho Junior High School (Grades 6-9)

Develop and institute a comprehensive, professional training and staff development plan for middle-level staff.

Plan and implement a comprehensive, professional training and staff development program to assist a highly experienced school faculty make the transition from a traditional junior high school to a middle-level school that reflects the recommendations of the Regents Policy Statement.

J. M. McKenney Middle School, Canton Central School District (Grades 4-8)

Increase educational program flexibility.

Develop and refine a middle-level educational program that (a) allows teacher teams greater programmatic flexibility to attend more effectively to the needs of middle-grade students and (b) provides for stronger vertical program articulation.

John F. Kennedy Middle School, Comsewogue Union Free School District (Grades 6-8)

Build on and improve an existing middle-level program.

Create a comprehensive middle-level educational experience that attends to the physical, social, emotional, and academic needs of the young adolescent and includes the following: the TARGET Interactive Project that uses an interactive videodisc system to recreate real-life situations; the Physical Fitness Center that addresses the physical needs of middle-level students; teacher teams that provide opportunities for interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum, sharing of teaching strategies, increased attention and energy devoted to academic excellence, and a focus on attitudes toward school and learning; the Mentor/Student Protégé Program to enable students to develop general career skills, attitudes, and work habits.

Kenmore Union Free School District (see Herbert Hoover Middle School)

LaSalle Middle School (see Gaskill Middle School)

Levy Middle School, Syracuse City School District (Grades 7-8); see also Shea Middle School

Develop a program of excellence for all students.

Institute a diversified program (Arts in Education, Cooperative/Interdisciplinary Learning, Conflict Resolution, Home-based Guidance, Minority Achievement, Gifted Education, various Alternative Programs) that assures that all students experience excellence.

Monroe Middle School, Rochester City School District (Grades 6-8); see also Charlotte Middle School

Improve academic achievement and foster personal growth.

Initiate several school-wide programs that ensure that all students become actively involved in a learning process that promotes both academic achievement and personal growth: heterogeneous placement in all regular education classes, peer and parent tutoring programs, counseling for students in need of special adult support, a 7-8 cluster of students who plan to be promoted into 9th grade in the spring.

Mt. Markham Middle School, Bridgewater-West Winfield Central School District (Grades 5-8)

Rethink and restructure the present approach to middle-level education.

Examine and improve present approach to middle-level education using the Effective Schools Model that provides for the establishment of a Middle School Building Team, for an assessment of the needs of the middle school, and for the development and implementation of a plan of action to address the identified needs.

New Berlin Junior Senior High School (Grades 5-8)

Create a middle school in a 5-12 building.

Develop and offer within the context of a small rural school as many aspects of a separate middle school as possible — consistent with the recommendations of the Regents Policy Statement—using the existing structure and staff within a 5-12 building.

Newburgh Magnet Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Develop a magnet middle school that is child-centered and a pilot school for research into the education of early adolescents.

Develop and operate a magnet middle school that focuses on academic excellence and personal/social development and emphasizes active learning, heterogeneous groupings, cooperative learning, small group and interdisciplinary instruction, advisor/advisee programs, etc.

New Hartford Central School District (see Ralph W. Perry Junior High School)

New York City School District (see Community School District #5, I.S. 195)

Niagara Falls City School District (see Gaskill Middle School or LaSalle Middle School)

Niskayuna Central School District (see Iroquois Middle School)

North Rose-Wolcott Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Implement an affective skills program and provide a transitional experience between elementary and high school.

Integrate into all middle grades a strong affective skills development component that focuses on positive self-esteem, personal responsibility, communication, assertiveness, problem solving, and decision making; provide an educational experience that is clearly transitional between the elementary school and the high school.

North Shore Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Create a middle-level school.

Develop a coordinated, articulated, three-year, middle-level program that includes interdisciplinary instruction, teacher teams, block scheduling, and an advisor/advisee program.

North Tonawanda City School District (see George L. Lowry Middle School or (Dr.) Thaddeus F. Reszel Middle School)

Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School and Robert Cushman Murphy Junior High School, Three Village Central School District (Grades 7-9)

Refine and extend existing innovative programs.

Build on and expand innovative programs that support student personal development within an academic environment and provide students with a "whole" rather than a "fragmented" school experience: Parent Involvement Program, Self-Esteem Committee, Hands Across America, Peer Tutoring, Peers Reach Out, the Transition Program, the Academically Related Support Program, Counseling Services, House Plan, Advisory Program.

Peekskill Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Design and develop a middle school.

Plan and implement an innovative, alternative approach to middle level education that will: assist students in developing their own personal identity while accepting their role as a group member (home-base program and a "looking-good-feeling-fit" program); promote academic excellence and an appreciation of the humanities (flexible block scheduling, "Students Excelling Through Enrichment" program); establish educational partnerships with the family, community and various human service agencies.

Queensbury Middle School (Grades 5-8)

Develop an interdisciplinary approach to science and technology education.

Implement new strategies that make science and technology education, as defined by State Education Department syllabi, more relevant in the classroom and that facilitate coordinated teaching in appropriate areas of science and technology to achieve the following outcomes: a stronger understanding by students of the relationship between technology and science and a more realistic view of general career skills necessary for entry-level employment that involves both science and technology.

Rhinebeck Central School District (see Bulkeley Middle School)

Ralph W. Perry Junior High School, New Hartford Central School District (Grades 7-9)

Implement an effective study skills program to increase student achievement and improve student attitudes.

Implement a study skills program that: helps students believe they can achieve, provides students with the skills and motivation to complete assignments, enables students to take responsibility for their own learning, and builds skills and attitudes that will lead them to be life-long learners.

Robert Cushman Murphy Junior High School (see Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School)

Rochester City School District (See Monroe Middle School AND Charlotte Middle School)

Rush Henrietta Junior High School (Grades 7-8)

Assess and document successful programs that meet the needs of emerging adolescents.

Assess and describe efforts currently being implemented to meet the needs of middle-level students including more effective articulation with grade 6 and grade 9, flexible scheduling, and instructional programs that improve student basic skills and are challenging and experiential.

Rye Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Implement and refine a Pupil Enrichment Program.

Continue the development and refinement of the Pupil Enrichment Program (PEP) to foster a healthier self image, to promote positive attitudes toward education, to enhance skill development, to provide enrichment activities, to permit interdisciplinary projects within the core academic subjects, and to allow for more heterogeneous grouping and an advisor/advisee program.

Rye Neck Middle School (Grades 5-8)

Refine and enhance an existing middle-level education program.

Create a middle-level environment where children can learn to be self reliant individuals who can realize success at the secondary level and beyond. Particular focus will be on the: evaluation of the middle-level curriculum, expansion of interdisciplinary instruction, strengthening of the student grouping strategies to maintain heterogeneous grouping where feasible.

Schroon Lake Central School (Grades 5-8)

Document existing and proposed innovative practices.

Evaluate and describe existing and proposed innovative educational experiences that: emphasize the integration of the disciplines, help students to develop communication, thinking, and decision-making skills, foster student self esteem, and encourage students to become self directed learners.

Shea Middle School, Syracuse City School District (Grades 6-8); see also Levy Middle School

Develop a multi-faceted middle-level program.

Institute a comprehensive middle-level program that improves student academic achievement to the point of excellence for all students, increases student attendance, improves the quality of instructional delivery, and continues a safe, secure, and positive school environment.

Shoreham-Wading River Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Create within and without the building a sense of community.

Build a sense of community for students at four distinct levels: a personal sense of community, a schoolwide sense of community, a sense of community with the neighborhood outside the school, and a sense of community with the world at large.

South Huntington Union Free School District (see Henry L. Stimson Junior High School)

Syracuse City School District (see Levy Middle School AND Shea Middle School)

(Dr.) Thaddeus F. Reszel Middle School (see George L. Lowry Middle School)

Three Village Central School District (see Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School and Robert Cushman Murphy Junior High School)

Ulster County BOCES Alternative Middle School (Grades 7-9)

Develop a model mini-school for at-risk students.

Improve academic achievement and develop positive attitudes among at-risk youth toward their education and school environment, their families, and their local community through the implementation of a staff-designed academic curriculum, behavior modification systems, counseling programs, and community outreach efforts.

Yonkers City School District (see Hawthorne Junior High School)

STATEWIDE NETWORK OF MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION LIAISONS

Each BOCES and Large City, through the Staff and Curriculum Development Network (S/CDN), has identified at least one practicing middle-level educator from a local school or district to serve as a member of the Statewide Network of Middle-Level Education Liaisons. The liaisons are available to assist schools in implementing the recommendations of the *Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades*. They also provide a communication and outreach function for the State Education Department: on the one hand, they disseminate information from the Department to schools and, on the other hand, they keep the Department appraised of what is occurring locally in middle-level education. A listing of the liaisons and their Vision Statement for middle-level education follow.

Phone Numbers
FOR STATEWIDE NETWORK OF MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION LIAISONS (BY BOCES OR LARGE CITY)

Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady BOCES	Henry Mueller	(518) 377-2190
Broome-Delaware-Tioga BOCES	Marlyn Geres	(607) 757-2333
Joseph Sever	(607) 692-3222	
Buffalo City School District	Sam Alessi, Jr.	(716) 893-9651
Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming BOCES	Lyn Griffiths	(716) 372-8293
Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES	Thomas Manko	(315) 626-2121
Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington BOCES	Richard McTigue	(518) 563-6800
Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES	Bernard Theobald	(607) 563-4225
Dutchess BOCES	Patricia Jatul	(914) 876-3075
Erie I BOCES	Sandra Allen	(716) 875-5875
Erie II-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES	Robert Sigler	(716) 483-4350
Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES	Edward Hanlon	(518) 891-4221
Genesee-Wyoming BOCES	Ernie Lusky	(716) 591-0400
Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES	Paul Snyder	(518) 661-5431
Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES	Johnnie Jones	(315) 865-8152
Jefferson-Lewis BOCES	Richard DeForest	(315) 629-4331
Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming BOCES	Robert Hilliard	(716) 335-4020
John Williams	(716) 346-2323	
Madison-Oneida BOCES	Terry Schaal	(315) 245-0080
Monroe I BOCES	Sherman Craig	(716) 385-6750
Monroe II-Orleans BOCES	Ronald Nigro	(716) 225-2409
Nassau BOCES	Enid D'Arrigo	(516) 678-1200
Fred Gimpel	(516) 623-8900	
Barbara Kolb	(516) 374-1706	
Lawr. Vandewater	(516) 255-8976	
New York City Board of Education	Yet-To-Be-Selected	
Oneida-Madison-Herkimer BOCES	Johnnie Jones	(315) 865-8152
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES	Renee Solow	(315) 445-8360
Ontario-Seneca-Yates-Wayne BOCES	Earl Mehlenbacher	(315) 597-3450
Robert Sherrill	(315) 594-8051	
Orange-Ulster BOCES	Domenic Leone	(914) 341-1500
Patrick Mataraza	(914) 744-2031	
Orleans-Niagara BOCES	Lee Pierce	(716) 731-3241
Dennis Tosetto	(716) 754-8281	
Oswego BOCES	Mark Montoney	(315) 695-1521
Mark Slosek	(315) 593-5440	
Otsego-Northern Catskills BOCES	Doug Exley	(607) 547-8181
Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES	James Alloy	(914) 241-6144
Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES	Joan Colangione	(518) 237-5525
James Gorman	(518) 271-5352	
Rochester City School District	Ted DeSoto	(716) 325-4560
Rockland BOCES	Joe Gibson	(914) 623-3828
St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES	David Crosby	(315) 386-8561
Saratoga-Warren BOCES	Robert Kelly	(518) 792-5891
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES	Dennis Ford	(607) 737-7400
Southern Westchester BOCES	John O'Mahoney	(914) 693-7640

Steuben-Allegany BOCES	Roger Grigsby	(607) 936-3788
Suffolk I BOCES	Richard Malone	(516) 283-6800
Suffolk II BOCES	Harry Faulknor	(516) 474-2710
Larry Lazar	(516) 473-8151	
Jack Sexton	(516) 758-1030	
Suffolk III BOCES	George Duffy	(516) 269-3269
Sullivan BOCES	Thomas Manell	(914) 985-2296
Syracuse City Schools	Jill Spellman	(315) 425-4215
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES	Ralph Undercoffler	(607) 844-8694
Ulster BOCES	Ira Glick	(914) 255-1300
Warren-Washington-Essex BOCES	Harriett Finch	(518) 793-3418
Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES	Earl Mehlenbacher	(315) 597-3450
Robert Sherrill	(315) 594-8051	
Yonkers City School District	Yolanda Lopez	(914) 963-4567
Richard Monaco	(914) 423-1806	
Charles Whelan	(914) 969-5552	

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State Education Department	Michael Fischer	(518) 474-5978
Carolyn Graham	(518) 474-7746	
David A. Payton	(518) 474-2885	

STATEWIDE NETWORK OF MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION LIAISONS (ALPHABETICALLY)

Samuel Alessi, Jr.
Acting Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum Evaluation and Development
Buffalo City School District
712 City Hall
Buffalo, NY 14215
(716) 893-9651
Large City: Buffalo City School District

Sandra J. Allen
Teacher
Hoover Middle School
249 Thorncliff Road
Kenmore, NY 14223
(716) 875-5875
BOCES: Erie I

James P. Alloy
Principal
Fox Lane Middle School
Route 172
Bedford, NY 10536
(914) 241-6144
BOCES: Putnam-Northern Westchester

H. Colangione
Principal
Cohoes Middle School
7 Bevan Street
Cohoes, NY 12047
(518) 237-5525
BOCES: Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene

Sherman Craig
Principal
Pittsford Middle School
Barker Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
(716) 385-6750
BOCES: Monroe I

David G. Crosby
Principal
McKenney Middle School
99 State Street
Canton, NY 13617
(315) 386-8561
BOCES: St. Lawrence-Lewis

Enid D'Arrigo
Principal
Oceanside Middle School
Alice and Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
(516) 678-1200 Ext. 261
BOCES: Nassau

Richard P. DeForest
Principal
Indian River Central School
P.O. Box 190
Evans Mills, NY 13637
(315) 629-4331
BOCES: Jeff-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-Oneida

Theodore DeSoto
Secondary Principal (middle school)
Rochester City School District
131 West Broad Street
Rochester, NY 14614
(716) 325-4560 Ext. 2257
Large City: Rochester City School District

George L. Duffy
Principal
William T. Rogers Middle School
Old Dock Road
Kings Park, NY 11754
(516) 269-3269
BOCES: Suffolk III

Doug Exley
Principal
Cooperstown Middle School

Linden Avenue
Cooperstown, NY 13326
(607) 547-8181
BOCES: Otsego-Northern Catskills

Harry A. Faulknor
Principal
North Country Road School
191 North Country Road
Miller Place, NY 11764
(516) 474-2710
BOCES: Suffolk II

Harriett M. Finch
Principal
Glens Falls Middle School
20 Quade Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 793-3418
BOCES: Warren-Washington-Essex

Michael Fischer
Associate
Bureau of Social Studies Education
Room 228 EB
New York State Education Department
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-5978

Dennis D. Ford
Associate Superintendent
Elmira City School District
Central Office
Hoffman Street
Elmira, NY 14905
(607) 737-7400 Ext. 344

BOCES: Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga
Marlyn A. Geres
Principal
African Road Junior High School
S. Benita Blvd.
Vestal, NY 13850
(607) 757-2333
BOCES: Broome-Delaware-Tioga

Joe Gibson
Rockland BOCES
51 Parrott Road
West Nyack, NY 10994
(914) 623-3828
BOCES: Rockland

Frederick J. Gimpel
Principal
Grand Avenue Junior High School
Grand Avenue
Bellmore, NY 11710
(516) 623-8900 Ext. 700
BOCES: Nassau

Ira S. Glick
Principal/Curriculum Coordinator
New Paltz Middle School
196 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561
(914) 255-1300 Ext. 230
BOCES: Ulster

James M. Gorman
Principal
W. K. Doyle Middle School
1976 Burdett Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 271-5352
BOCES: Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene

Carolyn Graham
Associate
Bureau of Science Education
Room 228 EB
New York State Education Department
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-7746

Lyn Griffiths
Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming BOCES
Windfall Road
Olean, NY 14760
(716) 372-8293
BOCES: Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming

Roger H. E. Grigsby
Principal
Corning Free Academy Middle School
Third Street
Corning, NY 14830
(607) 936-3788
BOCES: Steuben-Allegany

Edward J. Hanlon
Assistant Principal
Saranac Lake Middle School
Petrova Avenue
Saranac Lake, NY 12983
(518) 891-4221
BOCES: Franklin-Essex-Hamilton

Robert W. Hilliard
Principal
Dansville Junior High School
31 Clara Barton Street
Dansville, NY 14437
(716) 335-4020
BOCES: Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming

Patricia Jatul
Principal
Bulkeley Middle School
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
(914) 876-3075
BOCES: Dutchess

Johnnie A. Jones
Principal
Holland Patent Middle School
Route 365
Holland Patent, NY 13354
(315) 865-8152
BOCES: Oneida-Madison-Herkimer
BOCES: Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego

Robert J. Kelly
Principal
Oliver W. Winch Junior High School
87-99 Hudson Street
South Glens Falls, NY 12803
(518) 792-5891
BOCES: Saratoga-Warren

Barbara Kolb
Principal
Woodmere Middle School
1170 Peninsula Blvd.
Hewlett, NY 11557
(516) 374-1706
BOCES: Nassau

Larry J. Lazar
Principal
Port Jefferson Junior High School
Spring Street
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
(516) 473-8151
BOCES: Suffolk II

Domenic Leone
Principal
Middletown Junior High School
Grand Avenue
Middletown, NY 10940
(914) 341-1500
BOCES: Orange-Ulster

Yolanda A. Lopez
Principal, Junior High
Yonkers City School District
Burroughs Annex
Rockland Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705
(914) 963-4567
Large City: Yonkers City School District

Ernest F. Lusky
Principal
Attica Middle School
83 E. Main Street
Attica, NY 14011
(716) 591-0400
BOCES: Genesee-Wyoming

Richard C. Malone
Principal
Southampton Intermediate School
Southampton, NY 11968
(516) 283-6800
BOCES: Suffolk I

Thomas E. Manell
Principal
Tri-Valley Middle School
P.O. Box 420
Route 55
Grahamsville, NY 12740
(914) 985-2296
BOCES: Sullivan

Thomas J. Manko
Principal
Cato-Meridian Middle School
Cato, NY 13033
(315) 626-2121
BOCES: Cayuga-Onondaga

Patrick T. Mataraza
Principal
Crispell Middle School
Route 302 - Maple Avenue
Pine Bush, NY 12566
(914) 744-2031 Ext. 215
BOCES: Orange-Ulster

Richard McTigue
Principal
Plattsburgh Middle School
17 Broad Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 563-6800
BOCES: Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington

Earl R. Mehlenbacher
Principal
Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
(315) 597-3450
BOCES: Wayne-Finger Lakes
(Ontario-Seneca-Yates-Wayne)

Richard J. Monaco
Director of Instruction, Secondary Schools
Yonkers Board of Education
145 Palmer Road
Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 423-1806
Large City: Yonkers City School District

Mark W. Montoney
Principal
Emerson J. Dillon School
400 Volney Street
Phoenix, NY 13041
(315) 695-1521
BOCES: Oswego

Henry E. Mueller
Coordinator, Middle School Social Studies
Niskayuna Middle School
2459 Rosendale Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
(518) 377-2190
BOCES: Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady

Ronald J. Nigro
Principal
Athena Middle School
800 Long Pond Road
Rochester, NY 14612
(716) 225-2409
BOCES: Monroe II-Orleans

John J. O'Mahoney
Principal
Dobbs Ferry Middle School
Broadway
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
(914) 693-7640
BOCES: Southern Westchester

David A. Payton
Supervisor
Middle-Level Education Program
Room 660 EBA
New York State Education Department
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-2885

Lee Pierce
Principal
Towne Middle School
2292 Saunders Settlement Road
Sanborn, NY 14132
(716) 731-3241
BOCES: Orleans-Niagara

Terry G. Schaal
Principal
Camden Middle School
32 Union Street
Camden, NY 13316
(315) 245-0080
BOCES: Madison-Oneida

Joseph C. Sever, Jr.
Principal
Whitney Point Junior High School
Box 249
Whitney Point, NY 13862
(607) 692-3222
BOCES: Broome-Delaware-Tioga

John C. Sexton
Principal
South Ocean Middle School
South Ocean Avenue
Patchogue, NY 11772
(516) 758-1030
BOCES: Suffolk II

Robert C. Sherrill
Principal
North Rose-Wolcott Middle School
New Hartford Street
Wolcott, NY 14590
(315) 594-8051
BOCES: Wayne-Finger Lakes
(Ontario-Seneca-Yates-Wayne)

Robert Sigler
Assistant Superintendent
Jamestown City Schools
200 East Fourth Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 483-4350
BOCES: Erie II-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus

Mark Slosek
Principal
Fulton Junior High School
South Fourth Street
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 593-5440
BOCES: Oswego

Renee Solow
English Department Chair
Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School
Randall Road
Jamesville, NY 13078
(315) 445-8360
BOCES: Onondaga-Cortland-Madison

Paul G. Snyder
Principal
Mayfield Jr.-Sr. High School
School Street
Mayfield, NY 12117
(518) 661-5431
BOCES: Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery

Jill Spellman
Assistant to the Director, Middle Schools
Syracuse City School District
725 Harrison Street
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 425-4215
Large City: Syracuse City School District

Bernard F. Theobald
Principal
Sidney Middle School
Pearl Street
Sidney, NY 13838
(607) 563-4225
BOCES: Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego

Dennis Tosetto
Principal
Lewiston-Porter Middle School
Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
(716) 754-8281
BOCES: Orleans-Niagara

Ralph W. Undercoffler
Principal
Dryden Intermediate School
P.O. Box 88
James and Union Streets
Dryden, NY 13053
(607) 844-8694 Ext. 258
BOCES: Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga

Lawrence Vandewater
Principal
Southside Middle School
Hillside Avenue
Rockville Centre, NY 11570
(516) 255-8976
BOCES: Nassau

Charles D. Whelan
Principal
Emerson Junior High School
160 Bolmer Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10703
(914) 969-5552
Large City: Yonkers City School District

John M. Williams
Principal
Livonia Middle School
School Street
Livonia, NY 14487
(716) 346-2323
BOCES: Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming

Vision Statement

The middle-level education liaisons, at their first meeting on October 26-27, 1989, developed a **Vision Statement** to guide their future actions. The **Vision Statement** describes what the status of middle-level education in New York State should be in four years:

The status of middle-level education in New York State in 1993 will be as follows:

- **Pedagogical, administrative, and organizational practices and procedures in schools with middle-level grades will reflect the *Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades* and the most current educational research.**
- **Middle-level education will be recognized, acknowledged, and institutionalized by the Board of Regents and the State Education Department as an integral component of the K - 12 educational continuum.**
- **The Regulations of the Commissioner of Education related to middle-level education will reflect the recommendations of the Regent Policy Statement and the tenets of good practice.**
- **New York State will have a model communication and diffusion network involving the State Education Department, professional organizations, and local school personnel to identify and disseminate promising middle-level education programs and practices effectively and efficiently to all schools with middle-level grades.**
- **New York State will have a model education and inservice network involving the State Education Department, institutions of higher education, professional organizations, and local school personnel to provide appropriate, timely, and high-quality staff development and training experiences for middle-level education staff.**
- **The desired student outcomes of middle-level education will be defined and described and will be the focus of instruction in the middle grades.**

NEW YORK STATE MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Officers and Board of Directors

The New York State Middle School Association is committed to improving middle-level education. Its members are dedicated professionals who are valuable sources of support and information for schools interested in developing and/or refining their middle-level educational programs. They represent a network of practitioners available and willing to assist middle-level schools in their improvement efforts. Following are the names and addresses of the 1990 officers and members of the board of directors of the New York State Middle School Association.

NEW YORK STATE MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
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Nyack Junior High School
South Highland Avenue
Nyack, NY 10960
(914) 353-0503

VICE PRESIDENT

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Niskayuna Middle School
2495 Rosendale Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
(518) 377-2233

RECORDING SECRETARY

Janet E. Petersen
Grand Avenue Junior High School
Grand Avenue
Bellmore, NY 11710
(516) 826-2200 X 702

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Sandra Mehlenbacher
Greece Athena Middle School
4 Old Orchard Lane
Fairport, NY 14450
(716) 225-4080

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Ross M. Burkhardt
Shoreham-Wading River Middle School
Shoreham, NY 11786
(516) 929-8500

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Sherman L. Craig
Pittsford Middle School
Baker Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
716) 385-6750 X 276

JOURNAL EDITOR

Michael Johnson
Queensbury Middle School
75 Aviation Road
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 793-8811

REGION I DIRECTOR

Earl R. Mehlenbacher
Palmyra Macedon Middle School
Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
(315) 597-3450

REGION II DIRECTOR

Virginia Seminaroti
Otto Shortell Middle School
Box 173 Markell Drive
Wampsville, NY 13163
(315) 363-1050

REGION III DIRECTOR

Harriet M. Finch
Glens Falls Middle School
20 Quade Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 793-3418

REGION IV DIRECTOR

David Wasser
Harpursville Central School
Main Street
Harpursville, NY 13787
(607) 693-2500 X 37

REGION V DIRECTOR

Barbara Sieme
Lisha Kill Middle School
100 Waterman Avenue
Albany, NY 12205
(518) 456-2306

REGION VI DIRECTOR

Patricia Jatul
Bulkeley Middle School
P.O. Box 351
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
(914) 876-3075

REGION VII DIRECTOR

Stanley Lisser
Intermediate School #238
88-15 182 Street
Hollis, NY 11423
(718) 297-9821

REGION VIII DIRECTOR

Ellen Schwartz
Merrick Avenue Junior High School
Merrick Avenue
Merrick, NY 11566
(516) 623-8900 X 402

REGION IX DIRECTOR

Dennis M. Tosetto
Lewiston-Porter Middle School
Creek Road
Youngstown, NY 14174
(716) 754-8281

REGION X DIRECTOR

Jessica M. Deeb
Saranac Lake Middle School
Saranac Lake, NY 12983
(518) 891-4221

AD HOC COMMITTEES:
URBAN EDUCATION TASK FORCE

Joseph Sheperd
Lisha Kill Middle School
100 Waterman Avenue
Albany, NY 12205
(518) 456-2306

THE REGENTS POLICY STATEMENT ON MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL GRADES

The *Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades* was approved unanimously by the Board of Regents at its March 1989 meeting.

Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades

Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades

The New York State Board of Regents is committed to better beginnings and stronger completions for all elementary and secondary school students. Better beginnings prepare students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities, stronger completions enable students to take full advantage of their potential after high school. Linking better beginnings and stronger completions is that experience called middle-level education. As such, middle-level education is a priority of the Regents, because, without an effective middle-level educational experience, the advantages of better beginnings will dissipate and the possibility of stronger completions will fade.

The Regents believe that middle-level education is different from education in the elementary grades and education in the high school. It is different in that its students are experiencing a unique life phase, the change from childhood to adolescence. In addition, middle-level education provides the transition between the self-contained classroom of the elementary school and the departmentalized structure of the high school. This is not to imply that there are not commonalities among the three levels of schooling. Rather, it means that what is provided in the elementary or high school grades is not necessarily appropriate for children in the middle-level grades. Schools should not simply impose an elementary or high school orientation and structure on middle-level students, but should look carefully at the needs of middle-level students and the organization of middle-level education.

The student in the middle-level grades, typically between the ages of 10 and 14, undergoes profound transformations—physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically, and intellectually—that are unique in the individual's life. Also, middle-level education must accommodate educationally handicapped students who must go through this same process but have a more difficult time doing so due to their disabilities. Child development experts indicate that the transition from childhood to adolescence is one of the most crucial and least understood phases of personal growth.

A challenge to middle-level education is to make the transition from childhood to adolescence a positive period of development for the young, one from which they emerge with high hopes and the will to achieve to the best of their abilities. There are, however, some youngsters from all levels of society for whom emerging adolescence is a time of anguish and distress, a time where the negative outcomes include poor self-esteem, lowered expectations, difficulty in coping with peer pressures, alienation from school and society, and educational failure. These personal difficulties may be exacerbated in cases where either the home or the community in which the young person lives is economically depressed with limited opportunities for positive role models, employment, and a satisfying lifestyle. For these young people, their future appears grim, their challenges overwhelming, and their will to succeed diminished.

Traditionally, the family, peer group, community, faith institutions, and school served as the supports for young adolescents. However, changes within the home and society have left many early adolescents extremely vulnerable, without the support systems which they sorely need. Educators, families, and communities must recognize that they need to work together, and that they need each other, to assist students in a changing society. The need exists for educators to recognize and assume responsibility not only for their students' intellectual and educational development but also for their students' personal and social development. In many cases, students with special needs requiring enhanced support, such as those who have limited English proficiency, special talents or handicapping conditions, will actually receive less than other students, because such support is assumed to be adequately provided through their special services and programs. The entire school community must share ownership and responsibility for all students and provide the education, support, and guidance required by each student.

Schools with middle-level grades have a unique function. In order to educate their students effectively, they must help students through the transition from childhood to adolescence. The success of students in the middle-level grades often is the forerunner of success in high school and in later life; for these students, middle-level education is a springboard to future accomplishments and life-long achievements. Failure in the middle-level grades often results in students dropping out of school, defeated, disaffected and consigned to lives with little future and limited opportunities. For these students there is little hope they will complete their high school education or achieve their full potential. There is a pressing need to assure high quality instruction, course content, and support and other services in the middle-level grades and to promote high expectations regardless of handicapping condition, limited English proficiency, religion, sex, color, race, or national origin.

The Transition from Childhood to Adolescence

All students experience the transition from child to adoles-

cent as a natural and predictable life phase. What makes the transformation unique for each individual is the diversity in the onset of changes, the rate of changes, and the ability to cope with changes. No two people experience the transition in exactly the same way. The changes that emerging adolescents experience and the resulting behaviors include:

- Accelerated physical growth marked by the development of secondary sex characteristics, by hormonal changes, and by increases in weight, height, and muscular strength.
- Increasing importance of the peer group.
- Need for frequent affirmation and heightened sensitivity to comments about personal attributes.
- Desire and need for direction and regulation as well as for independence and autonomy, exemplified by testing limits of acceptable behavior.
- Array of intellectual skills and abilities ranging from concrete thought to more complex and abstract thinking processes.
- Preference for active in contrast to passive learning activities.
- Inconsistency in behavior.
- Desire to explore, to try new things, to experiment, to learn, to grow.

The student in transition from childhood to adolescence is driven by natural forces that he or she may neither understand nor predict. Contemporary societal views and expectations of adolescents, the pressures and demands of society on youngsters aged 10 to 14, and the rapid changes within society (including technological change and increasing cultural diversity) with which youngsters must cope may also affect the ease or difficulty with which these students deal with changes associated with the transformation from child to adolescent. These societal factors, while they influence all students in varying degrees, may have an especially profound effect upon those youngsters about to enter adolescence. They have the potential for compounding the ease or difficulty with which youngsters make the transition from childhood to adolescence.

Middle-level educators need to realize that these natural changes are inevitable and are often influenced by societal factors, and they need to provide educational experiences consistent with the needs and characteristics of the student in transition.

Philosophy and Mission

Middle-level education is not just a link between the elementary school and the high school; it has a purpose all its own. Middle-level educational programs that are most successful capitalize on the unique characteristics and needs of middle-level students and serve two purposes: academic excellence and personal/social development. The philosophy and mission of middle-level education:

- Acknowledge the importance of the school in assisting the student in his or her transition from childhood to adolescence. Middle-level education acts as a stabilizing force in the lives of early adolescents.
- Affirm the school's responsibility to assist the student in his or her transition from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school to the departmentalized structure of the high school. Middle-level education equips students with the necessary academic and personal/social knowledge, skills, and attitudes to succeed in the middle-level grades, high school, and beyond.
- Reflect an ethos of respect, caring, and support for the student. Middle-level grades serve as special places for students—a refuge and a support during a time of dramatic change.
- Recognize the importance of the individual. Middle-level education establishes in students a connection with school and with its purposes and never allows a student to become anonymous.
- Stress the development of the whole child, including his or her self-esteem and sense of personal identity. Middle-level education instills in students a sense of positive self-worth, self-respect, and self-confidence and a belief that each can succeed.
- Emphasize the balance between academic and personal/social growth. Middle-level education provides opportunities for self-exploration, self-definition, and self-development in the cognitive, affective, and physical domains.
- Affirm the importance of school and home connections and school and community connections in the education of middle-level students. Schools with middle-level grades seek and encourage educational partnerships with the family, community, and other human services agencies necessary for the effective education of middle-level students.
- Promote in emerging adolescents a feeling of personal efficacy and a sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Middle-level education provides opportunities and experiences for students to develop and practice responsible personal behavior, individual accountability and initiative, and a respect for others.

Successful middle-level educational programs focus on and promote both the intellectual and personal development of the early adolescent.

Educational Program

The middle-level educational program should be outcomes-based. These outcomes should reflect the 10 Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary School Students approved in 1984 and the attendant learning objectives contained in the various State syllabi for the middle-level grades. The educational pro-

gram should emphasize and promote: the requisite academic knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school—both middle-level and high school—and in later life; positive self-concept and emerging sense of self; social and interpersonal skills; a broadened experiential base; critical learning skills including information-gathering skills, study skills, decision-making skills, and thinking skills; life skills; a sense of academic purpose; a positive attitude toward school and learning; and an appreciation of and respect for cultural diversity.

The middle-level educational program should include instruction leading to the attainment of the learning objectives contained in the State syllabi for art, health and health-related issues including family life education, home and careers skills, language arts, library skills, mathematics, music, physical education, science, second language, social studies, and technology. However, this alone is not sufficient to meet the needs of the early adolescent. Middle-level students also need opportunities within the school program to develop as individuals. They need to develop the skill to explore new subject areas; learn to: examine alternatives, pursue personal interests, investigate potential futures and careers; and develop useful social, interpersonal, and life skills.

Organization and Structure

Schools with middle-level grades are organized to promote academic excellence and to establish within staff and students a feeling of belonging and a sense of personal identification with the school and with its purposes. Each student and each staff member needs to feel a productive part of the organization. Schools enrolling middle-level students should:

- Contain at least three grade levels. Schools with fewer grades may have difficulty fostering a feeling of belonging as there is no permanence— students are either entering or leaving; they are never "just there".
- Have comparatively small student enrollments so that every student is viewed as an individual and receives personal attention.
- Where the total student population is large, have "houses" within schools or schools-within-schools to promote a feeling of family and to reduce the feeling of anonymity among students.
- Have established procedures such as multi-year assignment of advisor-teachers, classroom teacher(s) or teams of teachers for the same students designed to develop long-term personal relationships.
- Use student grouping strategies that maintain heterogeneous classes but group for specific purposes and for brief periods.
- Have teacher teams sharing responsibility for the education and personal development of a common group of students.
- Have common planning time for those teachers and teacher teams sharing responsibility for a common group of students.
- Have schedules with flexible time assignments within blocks of time to encourage interdisciplinary programs and creative time use.
- Provide a gradual transition from the more self-contained classrooms of the elementary school to the more departmentalized structure of the high school.
- Provide a variety of cocurricular and extracurricular activities.
- Promote and encourage appropriate participation of pupils with handicapping conditions in all curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities.
- Have students with disabilities or other special needs, as well as their programs and services, integrated throughout the school building rather than clustered in a separate area.
- Provide support services such as guidance, counseling, and health-related services to all students.

Schools with middle-level students have an organization and structure that promote academic excellence and personal/social development.

Classroom Instruction

Teachers in middle-level classrooms understand and appreciate the changes that are occurring within their students and recognize the behaviors manifested by these changes. They use instructional techniques and processes that capitalize on the unique developmental characteristics and individual needs of early adolescents. Successful middle-level teachers:

- Involve students in their learning, encouraging them to take risks, to explore, to question, to experience, to learn, to grow.
- Vary activities to maintain student interest.
- Use flexible grouping based upon student needs and interests to help students achieve program purposes, with students changing groups often depending upon individual needs and program objectives.
- Use a variety of teaching strategies to match instruction to the varied learning styles of individual students.
- Use interdisciplinary approaches to help students integrate their studies.
- Use cooperative learning groups and peer tutoring opportunities to develop social and interpersonal skills in addition to academic proficiency.
- Consult with each other and with other school personnel. Teachers with regular education assignments and those assigned to programs for students with special needs work closely together.
- Inform and involve parents of middle-level students in their children's education by helping them understand

the instructional program, their children's progress, and how to help their children at home with schoolwork, school decisions, and successful development through early adolescence.

Administrators in successful schools with middle-level grades actively encourage and support classroom activities and instruction that foster the dual purposes of middle-level education—academic excellence and personal/social development.

Student Support

All middle-level students, and especially "at risk" students, need personal support in the school, in the home, and in the community as they experience the changes associated with the transition from childhood to adolescence. They need:

- Adults and older youth to provide them positive role models and constant affirmation and recognition.
- Respect and caring to engender a feeling of self worth, self confidence, and personal efficacy.
- Opportunities to examine, explore, discuss, and understand the changes associated with early adolescence.
- Counseling and guidance services to assist them in making life, career, and educational choices.
- A network of trained professionals, special programs, and community resources available to assist those who have extraordinary needs and require additional services to cope with the changes of early adolescence and/or the academic demands of middle-level education. Schools need to collaborate and cooperate with other human service agencies in the community.

Schools with middle-level grades assure, either formally through a teacher/student advisor/advisee program or informally through a school culture of caring where teachers or other adults assume responsibility for individual students, that every middle-level student has an adult mentor in addition to a guidance counselor.

Professional Training and Staff Development

Teachers, administrators, and other school staff need to know the characteristics of the middle-level student and the instructional program and processes that are best for these students. Personnel working in schools with middle-level students also need to understand not only the philosophy and mission of middle-level education but also the philosophy and mission of the elementary school and the high school. Middle-level staff need to be up-to-date concerning the course content and curriculum outcomes for the middle-level grades. All this information should be included in the preservice training of middle-level teachers and administrators or, for certified personnel now working with middle-level students, provided through a systematic and comprehensive inservice staff development program.

Conclusion

The Regents believe that the middle-level grades are a vital link in the education of youth, a unique period of education, and an educational priority. Until schools with middle-level grades attend to the twin purposes of academic preparation and individual self-development for all students in these years, the goals of better beginnings and stronger completions for all will not be realized.

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Promising Programs & Practices

IN MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION

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A Reference and Resource for Practitioners Interested in Implementing the Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools With Middle-Level Grades

CORRECTION and SUPPLEMENT

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Office of General and Occupational Education
Middle-Level Education Program
Albany, New York 12234

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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CORRECTION and SUPPLEMENT

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES IN MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION

During the preparation and publication of *Promising Programs and Practices in Middle-Level Education,* programmatic descriptions submitted by the following middle-level schools were inadvertently omitted from the section beginning on page 37 titled **"Promising Programs and Practices: School Organization and Structure — Area d: Creating Teacher Teams with Common Planning Time"**

- Newark Central School District
  Newark Middle School
- Newfield Central School District
  Newfield Central School
- Niskayuna Central School District
  Iroquois Middle School
- North Babylon Union Free School District
  Robert Moses Middle School
- North Salem Central School District
  North Salem Middle School
- Oceanside Central School District
  Oceanside Middle School
- Oswego City School District
  Oswego Middle School
- Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
  Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
- Pittsford Central School District
  Pittsford Middle School
- Poland Central School District
  Poland Central School
- Port Byron Central School District
  Port Byron Middle School
- Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
  Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Junior High School

Descriptions of the promising programs and practices from these schools are provided in this supplement, with apologies for any inconvenience caused by this oversight.

DISTRICT: Newark Central School District
SCHOOL: Newark Middle School
ADDRESS: 316 West Miller Street
Newark, NY 14513
TELEPHONE: (315) 331-5150
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 551
CONTACT: Robert J. Palmateer, Principal
Michelle DeRidder, Interim Vice Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The Newark Middle School has created teams with common planning time. The teams meet together every day at the same time. A variety of activities may take place during this time. Team teachers have the opportunity to discuss students' individual needs and progress and pinpoint any problem areas. Individual students and/or parents may be invited at this time to confer with the teachers. This can be used for positive feedback to a student. Students' work can be shared with other team members, who can in turn praise the student on an individual basis.

Team planning time has worked well for other activities as well. The team can plan and share uniform team rules, standards, and expectations for the students. Often team planning time is used for planning team activities and field trips and interdisciplinary units. Many times a topic in one class can get support work from other classes when the teachers know what each person is teaching. It helps make the needed connections among subjects for the students.

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DISTRICT: Newfield Central School District
SCHOOL: Newfield Central School
ADDRESS: 247 Main Street
Newfield, NY 14867
TELEPHONE: (607) 564-9955
GRADE SPAN: 7-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: James Cayea, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The core subject teachers in grades 7 and 8 are scheduled to have a common period each day for team meetings. The guidance counselor, principal, and dean of students are also part of the team.

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DISTRICT: Niskayuna Central School District
SCHOOL: Iroquois Middle School
ADDRESS: 2495 Rosendale Road
Schenectady, NY 12309
TELEPHONE: (518) 377-2233
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 809
CONTACT: Naomi Woolsey, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Teaching teams at Iroquois Middle School consist of four subject-area teachers (English, mathematics, social studies, and science). These teachers are assigned a group of 105 to 120 students. Each team is developed with input from teachers, administrators, counselors, and parents to create balance and develop a heterogeneous cross-section of the total school population. The team teachers' responsibility for these students extends beyond the core academic subjects; they act as homeroom teachers, they schedule a variety of team and interdisciplinary activities, and they provide a home base and a sense of community for the students.

Each teaching team meets a minimum of three times a week. Often these meetings include working with counselors, administrators, special education teachers, and other support staff to review and update the teachers on the progress and needs of specific students. Teams also use this time to meet with parents, plan special team activities, and adapt their regular schedule to team needs. Team teaching also includes a class period called Team Time. Every day, half of each team is available to all four of the team teachers, while the other half is in physical education. These smaller numbers allow for small-group and one-on-one instruction. During Team Time, students can catch up on work missed, move into accelerated or enrichment areas of instruction, make use of the resources of the Library/Media Center, meet with guidance counselors or other support personnel, or work alone or in groups on assignments. Team Time uses the best aspects of team teaching to provide unique opportunities for students.

Teams also organize to involve themselves in many activities such as an Adopt-a-Family program at holiday time, sponsored by the Salvation Army; other teams develop unique activities such as letter-writing campaigns to U.S. Navy personnel, an auction for Camp Good Times, and a Helping Hands community service program. Teams also organize a variety of affective education activities to develop students in these areas, such as team picnics, spaghetti suppers, and camping experiences. Each year, the school holds Opening and Closing of School Days, during which teams organize group-building and individual activities.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: North Babylon Union Free School District
SCHOOL: Robert Moses Middle School
ADDRESS: Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703
TELEPHONE: (516) 321-3251
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 1001
CONTACT: Helen Towey/Christine Kuchta,
6th Grade Teachers

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The North Babylon School District has recognized that adolescents need a strong support network to help them make a smoother transition from elementary to secondary school and, as a result, has developed a new program for the schooling of 10- to 14-year-old students. Sixth grade students have been moved from the elementary school to the middle school. Robert Moses Middle School houses grades 6 through 8. The goal is to provide academic, social, and emotional support for students through as many avenues as possible. Two of the avenues being employed to support 6th grade students are two-teacher teams and common planning time.

The goal of the program is to provide a strong support system for 6th grade students as they make the transition from elementary to middle school.

The objectives include:

- Students will have the support system for sixth-grade students as they make the transition from elementary to middle school.
- Teachers will have common time in which to discuss students' progress, strengths, weaknesses, successes, failures, problems, and needs. In addition, common time will be used to plan interdisciplinary lessons, share teaching methods and successes/failures, exchange ideas, give collegial support, plan trips and interdepartmental projects, and schedule parent conferences.
- Scheduling will allow for flexible teaching periods to address needs of students, academic programs, etc.

Staff are organized in the following manner:

- Each team member teaches reading in addition to two of the remaining subject areas of math, language arts, science, and social studies.
- The team has common lunch and prep periods daily. There is an additional common prep period on alternate days.
- The team cooperates in adjusting schedules to accommodate the needs of the children. For example, the math teacher's lesson might be continued in the science teacher's class. This flexibility also enhances the opportunity for interdisciplinary studies.

The Robert Moses Middle School's 6th grade program allows students to develop close interpersonal relationships with their teachers and classmates. Upon entering middle school, sixth-graders are not thrust into a program in which they see new teachers and new students each period. Instead, they remain with the same body of students throughout the day and are taught by the team. This procedure allows teachers and students to develop strong relationships and gain a deeper understanding of one another. Teachers and students share learning, ideas, and problems.

A necessary ingredient in the recipe for interdisciplinary teaching is flexible scheduling. This program allows the team to carry a teaching strand from one academic discipline to another. It also allows teachers to reinforce lessons as needed and address individual academic needs of children.

The Robert Moses Middle School 6th grade program also has a common planning time that allows the team time to discuss student problems and needs and to plan strategies to insure the success of each individual. The team is able to plan interdisciplinary lessons and make provisions for their implementation. Furthermore, the team has the opportunity to plan trips and develop interdepartmental projects.

Parent conferences have been scheduled during this planning time. The team and the parents have the opportunity to share information, accomplishments, and problems concerning the individual student.

Finally, when the team has common objectives, instruction becomes more effective. Common planning time allows teachers to become closer to their students and each other.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 year

MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE.

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DISTRICT: North Salem Central School District
SCHOOL: North Salem Middle School
ADDRESS: Old Route 124
North Salem, NY 10560
TELEPHONE: (914) 669-5414
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 195
CONTACT: Patricia P. Cyganovich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The heart of North Salem Middle School is the teacher team and corresponding common planning period. It is through this opportunity for collegial professional interaction and support that all decisions, innovation, curriculum redesign, and student intervention emanate. The organization of North Salem Middle School is based on the belief that middle school teachers have the expertise and responsibility for making educational decisions for their students. These decisions include but are not limited to curriculum, student discipline, extra and cocurricular activities, interdisciplinary activities, counseling referrals, textbook selection, and budgetary implications. North Salem Middle School follows the following practices:

- Teachers are members of the 6th grade or the 7th/8th grade combination team.
- Two periods of common planning time are assigned per week. This assignment replaces supervisory duties in the teacher schedule.
- One planning period per week is used for a joint 6th, 7th, and 8th grade meeting. Administrators, counselors, and any other interested faculty members are invited to attend. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and plan long-term middle school projects and activities such as field trips, assembly programs, and parent-teacher conferences, and to collaboratively solve problems related to middle school students and/or faculty.
- A second planning period per week is the meeting time of each individual team. During this session, teachers develop curriculum; meet with support personnel, parents, and/or students; provide collegial support; and establish strategies to promote individual student success.
- Agendas and minutes of planning period activities are recorded by team members.
- To facilitate two common planning periods per week, administration must make this component a priority item in master schedule development. In order to maximize attendance of as many other interested faculty members as possible, the planning period is scheduled while middle school students are attending lunch and recreation.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 6 years

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DISTRICT: Oceanside Central School District
SCHOOL: Oceanside Middle School
ADDRESS: Alice & Beatrice Avenues
Oceanside, NY 11572
TELEPHONE: (516) 678-1200
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 810
CONTACT: Enid D'Arrigo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

When the Middle School in Oceanside was conceived, the creation of teacher teams was considered to be essential. Each team consists of a teacher of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Each department chairperson also serves as team leader. The team leader functions as a facilitator, chairing team and parent meetings, assisting with the development of instructional and management strategies, etc.

Instead of traditional "duty" periods, teachers on each team are scheduled to meet twice a week (more frequently if necessary) during what is now known as a "planning period." (This is in addition to a regular preparation period in a teacher's schedule.) A teacher's day, therefore, consists of five teaching periods, a preparation period, a planning period, and a lunch period. Each team is responsible for the education of approximately 100-125 children.

The team approach has proven to be one of the strongest components of Oceanside Middle School. The teachers involved provide a built-in support system for each other. With the help of the counselor assigned to each team, the teachers are able to focus on developing common strategies to help youngsters succeed in school.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 5 years

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DISTRICT: Oswego City School District
SCHOOL: Oswego Middle School
ADDRESS: Mark Fitzgibbons Drive
Oswego, NY 13126
TELEPHONE: (315) 341-5856
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 787
CONTACT: Edward W. Matott, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The Oswego Middle School has seven academic or core area teams consisting of a science, mathematics, English and social studies teacher. There are three 7th grade teams, three 8th grade teams, and one 7th/8th combination team. Each team consists of approximately 115 students, divided into five sections or classes.

Each teaching team has a planning period of 42 minutes per day except the combination team, which has two periods per week. This team planning period is scheduled while the team's

students are in physical education/technology classes. This gives the teachers an opportunity to meet with parents, administration, guidance, or as a team to plan activities for the students.

In addition to the team planning period, each staff member on a teaching team has a 42-minute personal planning period per day. In each teaching team, this personal planning time is the same for all the team members with the exception of the combination team. This planning period is scheduled when the students attend their special-area classes of art, vocal music, and home and career skills. These related arts teachers, eight professionals in all, have a common personal planning time of 42 minutes per day and are also to be assigned during the activity period daily. This allows the related arts to meet by department to discuss students' needs. The same pattern applies for the physical education and technology teachers.

This staffing pattern allows for team and departmental planning. Team activities can be carried out very easily by the team teachers due to proper planning time. The team planning concept provides staff with great feedback about student progress, allows for parental meetings, and gives the administration an opportunity to meet with teaching teams in a small, friendly atmosphere.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 14 years

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DISTRICT: Palmyra-Macedon Central School District
SCHOOL: Palmyra-Macedon Middle School
ADDRESS: 163 Hyde Parkway
Palmyra, NY 14522
TELEPHONE: (315) 597-3450
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 485
CONTACT: Earl Mehlenbacher, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The faculty is currently organized into three grade-level teams (6th, 7th, and 8th), a developmental team (art, home and career skills, technology, music, and physical education teachers), and a special-needs team (special education and compensatory staff). Schedules are arranged so that teacher team members have daily team meeting periods in addition to personal planning time. Topics at team meetings include individual student progress, parent conferencing, instructional planning, and information sharing with support staff.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20 years

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DISTRICT: Pittsford Central School District
SCHOOL: Pittsford Middle School
ADDRESS: Barker Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
TELEPHONE: (716) 385-6750
GRADE SPAN: 7-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 750
CONTACT: Sherman L. Craig, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Interdisciplinary team teaching has been practiced in the Pittsford Middle School for over 20 years. Teams of four academic teachers and a guidance counselor meet daily to adjust programs, discuss students, and meet with parents. Over the years, the teaming approach has provided the students with a transitional organization that has provided support and understanding for young adolescents within the academic expectations of a suburban community.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 20+ years

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DISTRICT: Poland Central School District
SCHOOL: Poland Central School
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 8, Route 8
Poland, NY 13431
TELEPHONE: (315) 826-7500
GRADE SPAN: K-12 **ENROLLMENT:** 780
CONTACT: Jon E. Speich, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

The Poland Central School is organized as a traditional junior high school for grades 7 and 8 with approximately 120 students. Teachers have primarily junior high schedules in the areas of English, social studies, science, and mathematics. The junior high teachers are assigned a supervisory period in the morning, with ninth period used as a common planning period for these teachers. This allows the teachers to meet informally or formally daily to discuss curriculum instructional strategies, etc. The guidance counselor and the building principal meet with the teachers once a week formally to review students' progress, to discuss common successful techniques with troublesome students, to plan field trips, and to share ideas about curriculum. The time has also been used for common conferences with parents and/or students.

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DISTRICT: Port Byron Central School
SCHOOL: Port Byron Middle School
ADDRESS: Maple Avenue
Port Byron, NY 13140
TELEPHONE: (315) 776-8939
GRADE SPAN: 5-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 398
CONTACT: Scott Miller, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAM AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Port Byron Middle School has instituted a common planning period for each of its four grade-level teams. A 42-minute period is built into the daily schedule for the grade 5-8 teams. During these team planning periods, a variety of activities takes place. Individual students may be discussed, with suggestions made for dealing with academic deficiencies, behavior problems, or other difficulties. Strategies for improving student achievement are considered. Conferences take place with parents, as well as with support personnel. Meetings are held with the special education teachers of mainstreamed students. The principal meets weekly with each team. Field trips and other special activities are considered and arranged. Special area teachers, who are unable to gather at a common time during the student day, meet weekly after school. These teachers are also able to meet with grade-level teams at this time. The use of grade-level teams with common planning time is also ideal for interdisciplinary projects. A social studies-mathematics graphing project may be attempted; computer literacy and English are combined for word processing assignments; all subject areas are involved in research projects designed to improve student research and organizational skills. By utilizing grade-level teams with a common planning period, the teachers, support personnel, parents, and administration at Port Byron Middle School are able to keep the lines of communication open, to the benefit of all concerned.

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DISTRICT: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
SCHOOL: Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Junior High School
ADDRESS: Route 9W
Ravena, NY 12143
TELEPHONE: (518) 756-2155
GRADE SPAN: 6-8 **ENROLLMENT:** 532
CONTACT: Robert DeSarbo, Principal

PROMISING PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AREA: d

Teachers at Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Junior High School accept the responsibility for effective schooling. They realize that they can make a difference if they plan together. To this end, teachers are scheduled for common planning time on a team basis. This team planning is invaluable since the social-emotional as well as the academic growth of students must be studied. Teachers develop schedules themselves through cooperative planning.

Since classes are heterogeneously grouped, the special education and remedial teachers meet with the team frequently.

NUMBER OF YEARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PLACE: 1 1/2 years

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